

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council Chamber, Council House

on 10 July 2023 from 2.00 pm - 5.05 pm

Attendances:

✓ Councillor Carole McCulloch (Lord Mayor)	
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✓ Councillor Saj Ahmad	✓ Councillor Sam Lux
✓ Councillor Liaqat Ali	✓ Councillor Sulcan Mahmood
✓ Councillor Leslie Ayoola	✓ Councillor Farzana Mahmood
✓ Councillor Cheryl Barnard	✓ Councillor AJ Matsiko
✓ Councillor Steve Battlemuch	✓ Councillor David Mellen
✓ Councillor Graham Chapman	✓ Councillor Sajid Mohammed
✓ Councillor Kevin Clarke	✓ Councillor Fozia Mubashar
✓ Councillor Audrey Dinnall	✓ Councillor Salma Mumtaz
✓ Councillor Michael Edwards	✓ Councillor Sana Nasir
✓ Councillor Nadia Farhat	✓ Councillor Devontay Okure
✓ Councillor Faith Gakanje-Ajala	✓ Councillor Nayab Patel
✓ Councillor Samuel Gardiner	✓ Councillor Georgia Power
✓ Councillor Sam Harris	✓ Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
✓ Councillor Jay Hayes	✓ Councillor Ethan Radford
✓ Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora	✓ Councillor Nick Raine
✓ Councillor Imran Jalil	✓ Councillor Eunice Regan
✓ Councillor Corall Jenkins	✓ Councillor Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall
✓ Councillor Maria Joannou	✓ Councillor Samina Riaz
✓ Councillor Kirsty Jones	✓ Councillor Andrew Rule
✓ Councillor Kirsty L Jones	✓ Councillor Naim Salim
✓ Councillor Helen Kalsi	✓ Councillor Michael Savage
✓ Councillor Angela Kandola	✓ Councillor Matt Shannon
✓ Councillor Anwar Khan	✓ Councillor Hayley Spain
✓ Councillor Zafran Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Maria Watson
✓ Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Adele Williams
✓ Councillor Neghat Khan	✓ Councillor Linda Woodings
✓ Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis	✓ Councillor Audra Wynter

✓ Indicates present at meeting

14 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Nadia Farhat – personal

Councillor Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall - personal

15 Declarations of Interests

None

16 Questions from Citizens

Bus livery

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Planning: Can we have a public vote of Nottingham City residents regarding the return of traditional green and cream Nottingham City buses?

Councillor Angela Kandola replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor. While I appreciate and respect the issue as much as the questioner I do not think that this is something that we will be prioritising any time soon. For background, Nottingham City Transport moved away from the green and cream liveries on their vehicles in 2001, and adopted a coloured route branding instead, along the lines of the London tube map, to make it easier for customers to identify bus services which would be convenient for them to use. Decisions on marketing and branding of bus routes are taken on a commercial basis by Nottingham City Transport Ltd. who are operated as an arm's length company independently from Nottingham City Council. I think what is more important to people is having an affordable and reliable service. Over the past two decades, there has been growth in bus use as a part of our successful public transport network. Currently, Nottingham has the second highest level of bus use in the UK outside of London with the ease of use of the network with different coloured lines serving distinct areas of the city a key part of this success story. Public ownership has enabled us to go above and beyond on the concessionary passes for people in our city and that is particularly important as we go through a cost of living crisis. We also continue to invest in our bus fleet through more electric and biogas buses, with useful features such as USB charging ports, supporting our Carbon Neutral 2028 ambition. I am also pleased with the recent development of the Bulwell Bus Station, with the area much improved as a result. Nottingham City Transport's quality is recognised nationally – in 2022 Top National Driver, in 2021 Environmental Improvement Award, in 2019 UK Bus Operator of the Year, City Operator of the Year and Top National Driver, Unsung Hero Award and Services to the Bus Industry. With a record such as this, is it any wonder that Labour Metro Mayors around the country are using their own new-found powers to bring an end to failed Conservative bus privatisation.

Victoria Market

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: The market traders at Victoria Market have been waiting 18 months for a decision on the future of their livelihoods. During this period no new traders have been allowed in, strangling the market and £25,000 has been spent on consultants. When is a decision being made?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank the member of public for the question. The Council has been heavily subsidising the operation of the Victoria Market for many years and, as it seeks to ensure best value for the residents of Nottingham, it has been exploring the option of exiting its lease with the owners of Victoria Shopping Centre early, with another 50 years of the lease left to run. The Council estimated that continuing the operation of the market for this 50 year period would cost about £39m, including investment in the market to ensure its ongoing viability. This is in the context of falling Government funding for councils, rising demand for other council services and a renewed focus on placing the Council on a sustainable financial

footing. Like many markets, Victoria Market has seen a fall in trade in recent years, exacerbated by the pandemic. This, along with increased service charges for the market, has deepened the financial pressure on the Council to support the operation of the market. To achieve an early exit from the lease, a negotiated agreement has to be reached with current shopping centre asset manager, Global Mutual, as well as with traders over compensation. At the start of these negotiations, to protect and minimise new traders' risk of short term investment without longer term certainty, as we were seeking an early lease surrender, it was discussed, agreed and communicated to existing traders that there would be a pause in accepting new traders during this time. As the Council has unfortunately been unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with both Global Mutual and the traders, we have confirmed at a recent trader meeting that if new traders are interested in entering the market we will engage with them constructively to see what flexible arrangements can be made.

Victoria Market

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: In relation to Victoria Market, the Leader of the Council has stated negotiations are ongoing with Global Asset Management. Global Asset Management state that negotiations have ceased. Can documentation be provided to prove the truth?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you to the member of public for the question. The Council has been seeking to achieve an early exit and surrender from its current lease and to do so a negotiated agreement has to be reached with current shopping centre asset manager, Global Mutual, as well as with traders over compensation. Following confidential negotiations over recent months, the Council has unfortunately been unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with both Global Mutual and all the traders. An in-principle surrender agreement had been reached with Global Mutual to enable negotiations to take place with traders. Unfortunately, Global Mutual have now written to the Council to terminate this particular agreement to surrender. As a result, the indoor market will remain operational and senior council officers met traders on 15 June to confirm this. Meetings with Global Mutual and traders will continue to take place as we seek a resolution within the Council's financial parameters as quickly as we possibly can.

Use of Council Tax

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and HR: We have the highest rate of Council Tax in Britain. Why are our roads so poor and when our bins are not collected do we get a rebate on our Council Tax?

Councillor Audra Wynter replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank the citizen for their question. How Councils are funded is complex and there is no direct correlation between the level of council tax and service delivery as often services are funded from a variety of sources and prioritised through a number of robust decision making processes. The Council provides hundreds of services like looking after vulnerable people, keeping the streets clean, waste collection and running leisure centres. However, due to the Conservative's austerity the Council has had £100m less every year since 2010. This is the equivalent of £694 lost for every household in Nottingham, and £945 in real terms. At the same time demand for social care has been rising. Rather than properly funding social care, the Government's answer to close the gap is to add a

Social Care Precept onto our Council Tax, which benefits wealthier areas where demand is less and the council tax base is higher while leaving less well-off areas, like Nottingham, paying more for less. Nottingham has a particularly low council tax base, with 80.0% of its properties being in Band A and B compared to a national average of 43.5%. When you take into account all exemptions, discounts and premiums the average Council Tax actually paid means that Nottingham is 43rd lowest nationally for councils.

So what are some of the things that Nottingham residents get for their money? 15 neighbourhood libraries with a new library in Sherwood and a new Central Library still to come; 6 leisure centres; a programme of council house building; the best public transport outside of London; quality parks with 74 green flags; support for local people into work, training and education; 75 Community Protection Officers who work with the Police to keep Nottingham safe; welfare advice services; support for local businesses; and much more. However, I am never the one to be satisfied – Nottingham deserves nothing but the best. We need to continue to ensure a programme that is properly repairing and improving roads and pavements. We are currently half way through an investment programme for Streets for People, where spend has been prioritised at a local ward level based on need and feedback from residents. Likewise, there have been too many missed bins recently. A shortfall in staff alongside the volume of side waste has contributed to the recent service disruption. This is being addressed and regular benchmarks show that our service is cost effective compared to other areas at a cost 54p per household collection.

Disabled Access at Newstead Abbey

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: In recent TV coverage of the welcome re-opening of Nottingham Castle that there was a green Robin Hood themed electric shuttle bus in operation, presumably to transfer visitors with mobility problems up and down the hill, to the main attractions from the castle entrance. I presume this was a permanent arrangement rather than a one-off promotion associated with the re-opening. Can I ask the Portfolio Holder whether similar arrangements can be put in place at Newstead Abbey? I recently visited this fantastic historical attraction via a Pronto Bus, but unfortunately once dropped outside the main entrance there was still a two-mile round walk to actually get to the Abbey itself, and this can be an arduous (and dangerous) trek for those like me, with mobility problems. The livery of the electric shuttle bus fleet (the site would need at least two vehicles) could be emblazoned with illustrations from the Abbey and/or quotes from Lord Byron. I also noticed from a recent report that the toilets at Newstead Abbey are to receive a makeover, making them more accessible for disabled visitors, which I heartily support but making it easier for visitors to access the entire facility in the first place would be even more welcome.

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you to the citizen for their question. As part of the redevelopment of Nottingham Castle, the project was able to acquire and purchase a land train to help assist people moving around the site and from Brewhouse Yard Cottages at the bottom of Nottingham Rock up to Nottingham Castle at the top. The purchase was possible thanks to external funding secured and is a very new asset that the Museum Service is now starting to bring into safe operation within the confines of the Castle site. To date we do not have plans or funding to purchase similar vehicles for Newstead Abbey or Wollaton Hall and Deer Park. This is all

subject to funding I am afraid. As we look to review the operation of the land train at the Castle and better understand its usage and limitations, this might be something in the future we may want to expand to other sites, where a good business case might be able to be made for its practical and cost effective operation. This is something that we are definitely looking at. Whilst it is a very pretty walk down to Newstead Abbey, I do appreciate that for some the walk from the bus stop to the Abbey is a long one and I will ask for options in the short term might be able to be used to enable people with mobility issues in particular to have better transport in this location. Where we do secure additional funding, such as in the case of the toilet improvements, we are always trying to improve the site's offer and look very carefully at what interventions we can make to help improve access and accessibility for all. I do thank the citizen for the question because issues of access and accessibility are incredibly important.

17 Petitions from Councillors on behalf of Citizens

None

18 Minutes of the last meeting of Council held on 22 May 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

19 Official Communications and Announcements from the Leader of the Council and/or the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive made the following announcements:

I am pleased to report that the Council was Highly Commended in the Innovation in Delivering Sustainability and Social Value category at the MJ Awards in June for its work to improve the energy efficiency of buildings across the City through the Greener Housing scheme. The Council was also Highly Commended for a collaboration project with other Nottinghamshire local authorities in the Innovation in Partnerships category for work to deliver the Green Rewards programme which is helping residents to reduce their carbon footprints.

This year, Windrush Day marked the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush in Britain. On 22 June a Civic Service was held at the Council House to recognise the contribution of the Windrush generation to Nottingham.

I would like to note the passing of Dr Rose Thompson and Leonie Meikle - two people who made an important contribution to our city. Dr Thompson devoted her career to the NHS and was a champion of health equality and cancer support services. Leonie Meikle worked in education and was formerly the City Council's Head of the School Governors Service.

Following the events in the City on 13 June which resulted in the tragic deaths of Barnaby Webber, Grace O'Malley-Kumar and Ian Coates as well as injuries to others, the city came together at vigils at St Peters Church, the University of Nottingham campus and the Old Market Square to mourn their loss.

Councillor David Mellen spoke in tribute to those who lost their lives in the City on 13 June, Councillor Audra Wynter spoke in tribute to Dr Rose Thompson and Councillor AJ Matsiko spoke in tribute to Leonie Meikle.

A minute's silence was held.

20 Questions from Councillors - to the City Council's lead Councillor on the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

None

21 Questions from Councillors - to a member of Executive Board, the Chair of a Committee and the Chair of any other City Council Body

Safety on the Tram Network

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Would the Leader of the Council agree with our Group that with the increase in knife crime in our city and the recent tragic death on the tram network, the time has come to introduce inspectors on all journeys to reassure the public it is safe to travel on the network?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you to Councillor Clarke for this question. The recent incident on the tram between Bulwell and Highbury Vale was indeed a tragic incident, and our thoughts are with those affected by the day's events. The tram operator has been doing all it can to assist the Police with their ongoing inquiries, which are not yet complete. The operation of the tram is contracted out to Tramlink Nottingham and their sub-contractor, and they are responsible for the Safety Plan for the system. It should be noted that well over 6000 journeys are operated on the system each week, and the overwhelming majority of these pass off without incident. Given the number of journeys it is not possible to have safety inspectors on every journey, indeed not covering every journey is standard industry practice across all rail and light rail journeys. The operator does however have a robust and dynamic Safety Plan in place which aims to optimise the level of security provided to travellers and operations staff. It seeks to minimise crime and the fear of crime on the network, provide an effective deterrent against anti-social behaviour. The Plan sets down a series of measures, which include:

- CCTV provision on all trams, and across the system, with a control centre monitoring activity during operational hours;
- emergency help points on trams and at platforms, which connect immediately into the control centre;
- provision of Travel Officers to ensure a presence across the system during all service hours to provide reassurance to customers. The Officers have training in conflict resolution and personal safety;
- a process to review all incidents on the system to ensure effective deployment of Travel Officers; and
- regular engagement with Nottinghamshire Police, British Transport Police, Community Policing, City Centre management, universities, and other transport operators. A forum has been set up to share data and intelligence on anti-social behaviour trends across the city, and allow for more effective responses.

It is also important to note that the operator constantly reviews its safety approach, and has increased patrols on the system in the evenings in recent months in response to some incidents of increased anti-social behaviour across the network. They will also increase patrols in specific areas based on police intelligence. The operator is also in discussion with the Department for Transport (DfT) over developing a national light rail security plan, similar to that adopted in the heavy rail network, with a DfT inspector recently visiting Nottingham on a fact finding mission. The incident on 26 June was tragic and will have been shocking for anyone who witnessed the unfolding events. The operator will continue to take the security of its customers and staff extremely seriously, and review its policies on a regular basis to ensure the safety of its passengers.

However, we know that the causes of violence begin long before a crime is committed. To truly make a difference we have to intervene early to prevent these underlying causes from emerging in our communities. Many projects are underway to tackle knife crime, particularly groups aiming to support young people who may be at risk of, or be impacted by crime or violence. We have a clear strategy in the city of prevention, education, support and rehabilitation. These strategies would be even more effective if consistent and permanent funding was given to them. Our approach includes strengthening the networks that link organisations such as the Police and the City Council to allow us to better identify people who might be most at risk of knife crime so that we can target our resources directly to them. Siblings and friends of those involved in violent incidents need support to not get involved in violence themselves. Schools, supported by the Police and Council services are helping to get the message out as early as possible in an age appropriate way and we are continuing to help those who might be at risk of repeat offending by working with Probation Services to create positive opportunities including providing education, employment or training including finding the right support for young people and adults. We are committed to tackling knife crime but the solution is one in which we must all play our part to work closely together and co-ordinate our efforts.

Company Board Membership

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question the Leader of the Council: In one of our last exchanges at Full Council before the recent elections, the Leader of the Council advised the Chamber that following instructions from the Improvement and Assurance Board he would be resigning as a Director of Blueprint (General Partner) Limited in May. However we are now two months on from that exchange and he remains a Director. Could the Leader of the Council outline why these instructions have not been complied with?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you to Councillor Rule for his question. Following discussions with the Improvement and Assurance Board, a new policy and process that governs the appointment of Council nominated directors to company boards has been agreed. The new policy ensures that all the various interests are taken into account from the needs of each board, a strong commitment to the city of Nottingham and strong skills and competence in being a board director. Completing this process will take longer than previously envisaged but will result in strong appointments. Rather than leave company boards, like Blueprint's, short of directors, existing directors will resign once the new appointments have been made. Having taken advice from the Monitoring

Officer, his view is that to leave boards short of directors until the new ones are appointed would be destabilising and I agree with that judgement.

Street Cleanliness

Councillor Kirsty Jones asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Will the Leader of the Council join me in recognising the fantastic contribution made by our dedicated Public Realm Teams, along with the thousands of registered Clean Champions giving up endless amounts of hours helping to keep our City clean; and does he also share my disappointment with the statement that “Parts of the city are a dump!” and further agree that disheartening language, like this, should be avoided as it diminishes the efforts of the City’s Clean Champions and Public Realm Teams?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you to Councillor Jones for her question. I know I speak for all in this Chamber when I recognise the fantastic contribution made by our frontline teams who work hard to keep our city clean and all the Clean Champions volunteers who play an important part in keeping Nottingham clean and tidy. Keeping our city clean is a priority for this Council and that priority is based by the statistics that show that we have 74 Green Flag awards demonstrating high standards in our local parks; 8500 Clean Champions who regularly volunteer their time to litter pick and keep their neighbourhoods clean; Community Protection Officers who help to tackle illegal fly tipping and environmental antisocial behaviour; ‘days of action’ in each ward that bring together different services; and many ward councillors who use their ward funding for CCTV cameras in hot spot areas for fly tipping. Initiatives and priorities are supported by residents around the city who keep their gardens looking smart and those who, though they may not have gardens, make our streets look more attractive with window boxes and planters in front of their houses greening their streets and places where they live and work helping with our carbon neutral ambition.

However, we must also recognise that there are those who do not keep our city clean, who drop litter and do not clear up after their dogs which affects the cleanliness of the city. There is no excuse for this bad behaviour and we will use our powers to enforce and fine those who do not follow the basic rules of putting rubbish in the many bins available, disposing of bigger items in appropriate ways and clearing up after their dogs. Those are the ones who diminish the efforts of our staff and volunteers and we must do our part through engagement and enforcement to ensure that this behaviour reduces or, in an ideal world, stops altogether.

Starting in June, the Council and the Community Safety Partnership are supporting ‘days of action’ in our wards focused on improving the environments where we live. Many councillors will have been involved in litter picks and clean ups in consultation with our residents and other partners to make things better. Council staff supported volunteers to carry out deep cleans and targeted operations at fly tipping hot spots. For some of you these days have yet to take place but I look forward to seeing more photos of great work taking place. We continue to highlight the volunteers’ efforts by celebrating each year and providing opportunities for them to be involved, such as having their own personal messages on the side of our bin waste lorries to encourage others to take pride in their neighbourhoods.

Councillor Jones, I am happy to agree with you that we should praise our staff and volunteers who work so hard to keep our city clean and take pride in our city. We

must continue to work hard to praise those who work hard to improve the city and come down hard on those who treat it with no respect.

Allotments

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services and Parks: Could the Portfolio Holder update the Chamber on when she envisages the process of renewing the leases to the City's allotment associations will be completed?

Councillor Corall Jenkins replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Rule for your question. The Green Space and Allotment Team are currently working hard to reinstate the full allotment service as there has been a break in the continuity of the service during the last few years due to Covid restrictions and staff shortages. However, the Team is now fully staffed and is working through the backlog of priority projects. The Team manage over 2800 allotment plots that are owned by Nottingham City Council. Of these, approximately 800 plots are managed directly by the Allotment Service with tenancies to "direct-let tenants". The other 2000 are leased to 19 allotment associations or companies under business leases. The association managed sites include the majority of the large allotment sites ranging from 600 plots down to 30 plots. These lease-holding associations are required to manage and maintain their allotment sites independently from the Council. Leasehold sites and leasehold rents are set at a rent review every five years. All the Association sites have long term leases to provide stability. These are underpinned by a detailed management plan that gives exact guidance to site assets and boundaries including what should be carried out on site and where their responsibilities lie. Without this robust document, there will never be clarity over more ambiguous site issues i.e. which boundaries are the responsibilities of the Associations to manage, what and where water supplies are etc. The existing lease agreements were signed at various times and are normally 25 year leases, with a number now close to expiring. The current approach is to try and get a single lease agreement across all association sites, to make processing easier, rather than having to renew leases as and when they expire. Following on from discussions dating back to 2018, a draft lease agreements were created and in 2020, these were made available to associations and the main Nottingham Federation of Allotments and Leisure Gardens, who represent most but not all Associations. There was general consensus that the lease was appropriate, however some Associations do not want to change their terms, leading to complications moving forward. Both the impact of Covid and key officers leaving the organisation have meant that progress over this whole process has been delayed, as new officers are being upskilled to understand allotment laws and the relevant issues and background knowledge of each site in order to be able to move this forward.

Moving forward the Service will:

- review the lease agreements and understand which Associations are unhappy with the proposal. Discussion will then be arranged with these associations in order to confirm a way forward;
- work with individual Associations that are in agreement to develop site specific management documents for implementation;
- ensure Associations comply with current legislation including legal changes since leases were last issued i.e. Equalities Act, GDPR; and
- provide training and support with association members so they understand their legal and operational duties as volunteers.

The next steps for the Greenspace and Allotment Team will be to work on the development of a draft management agreement template which can be used as a starting point for developing individual site-specific management agreements. As there are 19 Associations, the Service plans to review the leases on a rolling programme in line with the timing of the individual lease arrangements and their scheduled leased renewal date. At this time the old leases will be replaced with the new lease and management agreements. The Greenspace and Allotment Service has recently restarted the review process and envisage that engagement with the priority lease associations about specific management agreement requirements will take place over the coming months.

Libraries

Councillor Maria Watson asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Whilst we value the opening of the new Central Library and a new Sherwood Library, we were disappointed to hear that the libraries in Aspley, Radford-Lenton and Basford, that were previously saved a few months ago, may once again be under review. Can we please request that everything will be done that is possible to stop any further closures or reduced hours for libraries?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, and can I thank Cllr Maria Watson for her question. I want to assure councillors that no change from the decision that was taken by the Executive Board on 17 January 2023 is proposed or planned to take place regarding Nottingham's Libraries provision. Unfortunately, following an open letter submitted by the 'Save the Libraries' Group to which I responded, the reporting on this matter did get slightly misreported and I think that has led to the confusion that is referenced in Councillor Watson's question.

Councillors will recall the extensive and comprehensive consultation exercise took place as part of the Libraries Needs Assessment work in 2022 and that, following further feedback around initial proposals and wide consultation, it was finally agreed that no library closures would take place. Can I repeat, no library closures are proposed to take place. In order to help achieve the savings that were required to be found by the Library Service as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial plan, a small reduction of hours across the network was, as an alternative saving proposal, proposed and agreed. This work is now being implemented by the Service.

As I have stated previously and publicly, I expect 2023 to be a very positive year for the Library Service that will see the reopening of Nottingham Central Library and new replacement library for Sherwood. However, the financial climate remains challenging and we cannot shy away from this. We have to ensure that we provide best value, which is a statutory requirement. We are not in control of the Conservative Government - we can only ask for more funds to be given to local councils so that they can deliver community services, but we cannot control the flow of money coming in. If people have a certain orthodoxy that doesn't allow for community services to thrive, is that the fault of local government? You can look centrally for that. What I can say with certainty though is that I will do what I can, and the Service will do what it can to protect and continue to ensure provision of a comprehensive and efficient service for all of Nottingham's residents in terms of our libraries, looking to work wherever we can to maximise income, use new and innovative technology and better economies of scale along with partnership working

with the County Council and other operators and exploring opportunities for shared spaces to find the best way of working so that we make the savings we need to make but at the same time that we protect the Service to the best of our ability. This is our intention.

Financial Controls

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Could the Leader of the Council confirm whether he has had access to the full unredacted version of the Ernst Young report on management override of controls commissioned by the S.151 Officer?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you to Councillor Clarke for his question. I have not seen the report prepared by Ernst Young (EY), which was developed to give technical advice and opinion as to the effectiveness of financial controls at Nottingham City Council to officers and, as is appropriate, given the complex and serious issues that arise from the commission, I have been guided by the professional advice of the Council's Section 151 Officer. I would remind colleagues that under Article 5 of the Constitution, officers are responsible for ensuring the Council acts lawfully and with financial propriety and for giving professional advice to all councillors. I am confident that EY's findings have been fully explained to councillors through the comprehensive briefings delivered by our Section 151 Officer, which have been presented to both myself and colleagues in a clear, open, and transparent way that has enabled us to understand the content and implications of the report. The Audit Committee recently received a presentation on the content of the report from EY and there will also be periodic reporting back to the Audit Committee, which is a public meeting that anyone can attend. I have asked that all my Portfolio Holders raise the issue of the controls environment in the area for which they are responsible at their regular meetings with Directors so that elected members properly understand the challenges experienced in departments and to ensure that recommendations and improvements are being met. The recent report to the Audit Committee did not underplay the seriousness of the issues found and indeed confirmed that over the three years reviewed, there have been numerous incidents of control breaches, leading to the assessment that the Council is operating with a considerably weakened control environment which is not fit for purpose in allowing a local authority to enact effective financial stewardship. In my view, developing proportionate and timely mitigations to this unequivocal and concerning professional opinion provided to councillors and accepted by the Council's Section 151 Officer, is where our collective attention should now be directed. That work has started and will be continuing at pace.

Nottingham Castle

Councillor Matt Shannon asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Could the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture please update Council on how the re-opening of the Nottingham Castle went?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you for the question. On Monday 26 June 2023, I am pleased to report that Nottingham Castle re-opened its doors with local school children from Edna G Olds Academy Primary School and Robin Hood present, and the site is now open for everyone to enjoy. Once the doors were opened, a large crowd of over 1800 visitors,

including visitors from further afield, flooded through the gates on that first day to once again enjoy the site. Having been present on the day, the sense of excitement and relief that this important historic site was once again re-open was tangible, echoed by the smiles and enjoyment I saw on many people's faces coming back and reacquainting themselves with this unique and special site. In getting to this point, I can't praise enough the work and commitment this took by many colleagues across the Museum and Gallery Service in ensuring that after just 13 weeks from the decision being made by the Executive Board to re-open, the site was able to provide a full offer. This work included advertising and recruiting a team of new staff to be able to undertake the operation of the site; developing and launching a new family orientated pricing structure for the site (£12 for the year with under 15 year olds free); the opening of Brewhouse Yard Cottages; and bringing together a special Windrush Pop Up Exhibition working with Museum and, the National Caribbean Heritage Museum to celebrate 75 years of this important event. If that wasn't enough, prior to seeing the full site re-open, six other open days of the grounds took place to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, to show the finals of the Eurovision Song Contest and host a medieval legends weekend. It was extremely gratifying to see the positive TV and media coverage we gained and support from the Nottingham public, local organisations and businesses who were very supportive of our approach and work.

Whilst we have now successfully reopened the site, the team know there is a lot of work to do and are very focused around re-building the profile of the Castle and the Museum, making improvements to the visitor experience to the site, looking to develop and secure new events to help animate the site and build stronger all year seasonal appeal, whilst also planning and bringing together a full exhibition programme for later this year and in 2024. We made pledge to the Nottingham public that we would reopen the Castle and this has now been done. A great effort in deed and testament to the care and love of our employees in the Museum and Galleries Service. It has been a privilege to work alongside a team of remarkable individuals, people of great integrity. Well done to you, you have helped serve the people of Nottingham well.

Windrush Day

Councillor Leslie Ayoola asked the following question of the Deputy Leader of the Council: Could the Deputy Leader of the Council please inform Full Council on how the 75th Anniversary of Windrush was celebrated in the City?

Councillor Audra Wynter replied as follows:

Thank you for the question. Reverend Clive Foster MBE from the Pilgrim Church organised a series of exciting events to mark the 75th Anniversary of Windrush, to acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of the Windrush generation. The events were also an opportunity to celebrate today's multi-talented descendants of the Windrush generation, bringing a unique inter-generational feel to the occasion. The celebrations began on 8 June with a special Windrush lecture by author and BBC producer Colin Grant, writer of several Windrush books. It was an occasion for the diverse student population to engage in inspiring stories of the Windrush generation. The Council's Resident Development Team supported Clive to host a Civic Service at the Council House on the 22 June with a host of dignitaries and speeches. The event also included contributions from local school children, poets and singers along with information stalls around health, energy efficiency, The Voice newspaper and

publications and exhibitions. This included the touring exhibition 'Digging Deep Windrush Generation Miners and Their Industrial contributions Project'. A main point was the raising of the Windrush flag - we are standing on their shoulders. The Council House was lit up in yellow and green to reflect the Windrush generation and the event was livestreamed and filmed by Notts TV. I would like a special mention of a gentleman born in Jamaica who celebrated his 100th birthday in May. He actually attended the event. He worked for Beeston Boilers and lives in the Leen Valley ward. He received a standing ovation and was really pleased about being interviewed by Notts TV. I think it would also be remiss of me not to mention the woman who hosted the first Windrush tea party at the Council House in 2018. This was followed by a series of events held from 22 to 25 June at Binks Yard including performances, speeches, cooking demonstrations and gospel choirs. There was also a Windrush walk by the Canal and River Trust and a special 75 dominos tournament which was featured by the BBC. Clive Foster said 'I have not seen the black community energised like this for years after an event in the city and the event was very diverse in terms of ethnicity and age group over the 4 days and local national coverage. We have had lots of positive feedback for the sessions.' There was also a Windrush event held at Nottingham Castle and that will be there until the end of October. Finally, in honour of the Windrush generation a special tribute was paid to two pioneering councillors from the Windrush generation with two streets dedicated by Tuntum Housing Association – Dr Des Wilson and Tony Robertson. There was a great turnout at the grand opening ceremony of the Tuntum Housing Scheme and development of St Anns.

Public Safety

Councillor Angela Kandola asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion: Could the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion please update Full Council on what work is ongoing to ensure the public feel safe after the tragic deaths that occurred on 13 June?

Councillor Sajid Mohammed replied as follows:

Thank you for the question. I would like to take the liberty of extending the question slightly to also recognise the very tragic murder that happened in Clifton when an arsonist murdered a mother and her two children. Both of these incidents really shocked the core of this City. So, on behalf of the Council and everyone in this room, I would like to give our sincere condolences and our thoughts and prayers to families and victims. I would also like to recognise the victims who have suffered serious life altering injuries. Following on from the Leader of the Council's earlier comments about knife crime and safety, I want to give a further update to councillors. As I am sure everyone knows, on both occasions the Police were very swift in their response, made arrests and did not look for anyone else. The arson attack has gone to court, the perpetrator was found guilty and given a 44 year sentence. The suspect that was swiftly arrested after incident on 13 June is currently in court and therefore I won't comment on that any further. On behalf of Council and for all of us, I would like to give our thanks and gratitude for the courageous response of the frontline officers who went to those crimes, from brave Community Protection Officers, the Police, the NHS or Fire Service for dealing with such horrendous crimes.

In response specifically to the question about reassurance on what the Council is doing, I want to recognise the courage and grace and example of the families,

particularly at the vigil, when they clearly gave Nottingham advice - they said look after each other and do not let hate divide us. Ever since the incident myself and officers have been working closely, and the great strength of this city it is partnership work, with other statutory organisations along with the voluntary sector to come together and coordinate our response. It is an ongoing response. We are mindful of vulnerable communities: those who work in night-time economy, Black and Asian Minority Ethnic communities, students, faith communities and those communities seeking sanctuary. Ever since the incident, initially every day and now fortnightly, myself and Chief Inspector are meeting with key network leaders within the community and statutory organisations to discuss concerns and issues. This has also allowed us to refresh our governance and partnership working arrangements and we will hopefully be launching the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership in October. This will include nearly a dozen working groups, including one on serious violence. This group is already undertaking assessments of serious violence, on how they can bring extra funds together and how, as a city united, we can tackle knife crime and other serious offences. I want to recognise once again the victims and the families and what they said about victims being committed to this city. This city is one of the country's great cities. It is a city of welcome, of opportunity, of hopes and dreams and a city of work, study and leisure. It is city that people can come to and be a part of, where everyone can thrive and be their best. For that to happen we need to be constantly working with our communities, bringing people together and not let voices try to disunite us with messages of hate, voices try to separate families, friends and neighbours from each other for their own political gain. I hope that everyone in this Chamber can commit to making Nottingham a 'no place for hate crime'. I am pleased to report that we have a satisfaction rate of almost 85% when people do report hate crime. Nottingham has been leading the work on tackling hate crime in this country and was the first city to make misogyny a hate crime. We are a city where the Police take hate crime very seriously. If someone is feeling that their life is threatened they should immediately phone 999 and 101 in a non-emergency situation. If they would like to report a hate crime through the internet they can go to www.report-it.gov.uk. The police will have a swift response. I also want to recognise how we bring our communities together. I want to recognise my co-councillors – Councillors Ayoola and Jones in Mapperley who joined me and our local MP to walk along Mandala Road and speak to residents to give them reassurance. I want to recognise Councillor Ali who walked along Bentinck Road and Radford Road to look at issues of anti-social behaviour. I want to recognise Councillors Jenkins, Khan and Okure who visited the school in their ward where Ian Coates was the caretaker, attended the vigil and have been giving reassurance. I want to recognise Councillors Shannon and Lux who visited faith institutions in their ward with me to thank them for the work they did during the incident, and also build our relationships so that we can reassuring messages that Nottingham is safe and that Nottingham is a great city. It is great because it is our home. It is a place where we want to raise our families, we want to fall in love, work and make a difference. It is a city with a city centre that has purple flag status showing that we work in partnership with statutory organisations and businesses to make sure that the night-time economy is as safe as possible. We have already invested over £250,000 in refreshing the CCTV network in the city so it goes to central place enabling better responses times, easier identification of victims so that they can be supported and collect solid evidence that gets us convictions.

This is a very sensitive time for all of us and I would never want to use that for party political scoring, but it would be an injustice if I didn't state what the greatest threat to

safety in the city is. It is two things: Government policy and political actors on the right using social media to sow hatred in our city. For far too long the Government has devastated cities with austerity, affecting the ability to tackle the underlying causes of crime, youth work and closing police and fire stations to devastating effect. We can only ever get justice if people are serious about having a safe and prosperous Nottingham, and then we need a Labour Government as quickly as possible. I would welcome an election. What we in this room can do, and I am reaching out to everyone, is wherever we can we need to renew our civic duty. If there is going to be a legacy from these deaths, it is that everyone, as the families said, reach out to neighbours across to garden, talk to people at the shop and on the tram to give that reassurance. We know that people feel safe when they know their neighbours and they know how to talk. Issues of isolation and mental health will also be tackled. What we cannot allow is political groups and political actors using social media to divide our communities through hate. It doesn't matter what colour you are, your faith or your gender, if you live in this city you are from Nottingham and you belong here because this is our home.

Future Hospitals Programme

Councillor Georgia Power asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health: Does the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health share my disappointment for the delay to the Nottingham Future Hospitals programme and the Health Secretary's recent comments defending this?

Councillor Linda Woodings replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Power for your question. I do indeed share my colleague's disappointment about the delay to the much needed refurbishment of City Hospital and Queens Medical Centre - deeply disappointed but unfortunately not surprised. Let's face it, this city and this nation has been repeatedly let down by years of Conservative mis-management of this country's resources. We, along with it seems everyone else, is sick of their broken promises, their commitments and their lies. You will recall that back in 2019 in the run-up to the general election, Conservatives tried to conceal their natural antipathy for the NHS, demonstrated by years of their systematic underfunding, by making a bold election claim. Matt Hancock, the inept Health Secretary, promised that a Conservative Government would build 40 new hospitals by 2030. A year later they announced funding of £3.8bn and said that they had invited a further 8 trusts to bid so now 48 new hospitals by 2030. By any common understanding this means additional, extra facilities. But how quickly that promise fell apart under scrutiny. 22 of the 40 are rebuilds of existing facilities, 12 others are just wings on existing hospitals, 3 are for non-urgent care centres so just 3 out of the original so called new hospitals are totally brand new. Same old Tories, same old lies. Still, we had the saving grace that at least we would have rebuilds of the Queens Medical Centre and City Hospital, and ambitious plans for redevelopment were put together last autumn under the Tomorrow's NUH Programme showing new treatment buildings and a new welcome centre at the Queens Medical Centre with new shops, restaurants and staff facilities including changing rooms, showers, education and agile working space and multi-faith centre. We were also promised a new women's and children's hospital, a new cancer centre at the Queens Medical Centre, a new dedicated elective facility at the City Hospital and the expansion of emergency services at Queens Medical Centre. But to no avail because last month an announcement was made that the neither project will not be complete before the end of the decade as promised. In fact, we are one of several projects delayed because five other hospitals not on the original list are at risk of collapse. It is

disgraceful that after 13 years the NHS estate has been allowed to crumble to such a degree that we are told that patient safety is at risk. So although work will start on a new surgical hub and three new operating theatres, that was what was announced, they were already funded from the post-covid funding and needed as part of the Ockenden review, the rest of the project is now delayed. We know that the Queens Medical Centre has one of the largest repair bills in the country – millions of pounds are needed for repairs on decaying buildings and equipment, and repairs are done on a risk assessed basis. So it is shameful that this promised redevelopment cannot proceed as planned. We have been here before with broken promises and schemes kicked down the road – remember the promised electrification of the Midland Mainline, scrapped two weeks after polling day; remember Boris' Leave campaign of an extra £350m per week for the NHS if we left the EU, scrapped; no one would have to sell their home to pay for care we were told and in fact there are new plans but no guarantee that people won't lose their homes and the start of the Care Cap has been delayed; a promise to bring down wait times by Rishi Sunak and now 7.4m, the highest ever number of people, are waiting for treatment and last week the Minister admitted that the number would go up before it came down. I could stand here all day long, reams and reams and reams of broken promises. Again and again the people of this country have been betrayed. Then we add in the gross waste of money during the pandemic - 3.5m antibody tests that didn't work, £20m; personal protective equipment in short supply that wasn't effective and written off, £9bn on unusable or overpriced personal protective equipment; £4.3bn fraudulently claimed in covid grants written off; and the award of multi-million pound contracts to the VIP lane of Conservative Party cronies who had zero experience of supplying personal protective equipment; the promise of a pay increase to NHS staff reduced by half to just 1% in 2021 – that money could have been used to pay staff a decent pay rise and avoid some of the many strikes that justifiably have, and will take place. We will wait with baited breath to see if these much needed rebuilds ever actually materialise. I am not betting on it unless we see a Labour Government.

Fire Safety

Councillor Sam Gardiner asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing: Six years on from the tragedy of the Grenfell Fire, could the Portfolio Holder for Housing please update Full Council on the state of our City's high-rise buildings in terms of:

- i) Cladding remediation works
- ii) Retro-fitting of fire safety systems
- iii) Timescales for completion of all works
- iv) Fire safety audit results
- v) Concerns outstanding from tenant forums
- vi) Overall assessment
- vii) Compensation from Government

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Gardiner for your question. In the six years since that disaster the Council's Housing Service, formerly Nottingham City Homes, has not stood still. It has been busy inspecting all our high rise buildings and making sure that they are safe for our residents who live in them. Nottingham City Council Housing Service manages 13 high rise blocks and a further 18 high rise buildings are privately owned in the city. We have worked with the Fire and Rescue Service who have undertaken audits of all of our 13 properties. We are currently doing further inspections at

Southchurch Court in Clifton and Victoria Centre flats. So far no further action has been identified for us to take. We have installed sprinkler systems in all of our flats and communal areas which means that in Nottingham City Council flats, 1508 individual flats have better fire safety systems and sprinklers in place. The question makes reference to tenant engagement and I believe that it is vital to listen to our tenants to deliver a good service. Since Nottingham City Homes has been brought back in house and with establishment of the Housing Service we have changed the way we are interacting with residents. We are reaching out to a wider number of residents across our city and getting wider feedback from people from all walks of life and backgrounds. In the high rise buildings we engage with the tenants every quarter, the last one being in June this year. So far no safety concerns have been raised by tenants, but I would encourage all tenants in high rise buildings to get in touch with the Council if they are concerned or have any issues. We are here to listen. In the private sector, out of the 18 buildings identified with ACN cladding remediation work has been completed on all the buildings. Each building has been inspected by the Fire and Rescue Service and any improvements required to those buildings have been communicated to the owners. I am pleased to say that all work in the privately owned buildings has been completed. We have met the deadlines and met our timescales, and I am pleased to say that our buildings are looking good and I am sure that our residents are safe in those buildings. The question mentions cost. After the disaster councils were promised funding from Government to have quick safety improvement works done. Since then we have received nothing from the Government, not a penny. However, if we were a private organisation, a private owner of a high rise building, we would have been able to apply for grant funding from Government. I am personally angry and frustrated that this Conservative Government does not care about the lives of Council tenants in high rise flats. They really do not care. They value them less than those in privately rented flats. It is absolutely disgusting and the Government should be absolutely ashamed of that and should pay what they owe to local authorities not just in Nottingham but across the country. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the officers and staff in the Fire and Rescue Service who have worked with us to ensure all buildings are safe and we will continue to work with our partners so that everyone has a safe and secure place to live.

22 Decisions taken under Urgency Procedures

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report informing Council that since the last report to Council in May 2023 there have been no decisions taken under urgency provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Article 11) and Access to Information Procedure Rules (Article 13) of the Constitution. The report was seconded by Councillor Audra Wynter.

Resolved to note that no decisions had been taken under urgency provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Article 11) and/or Access to Information Procedure Rules (Article 13) of the Constitution since the last report to Council in May 2023.

23 Executive amendments to the Constitution

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report notifying Council of Constitutional amendments necessitated by changes he had made to Executive delegation arrangements. The report was seconded by Councillor Audra Wynter.

Resolved to note that Article 10 (Executive Arrangements) and Article 13 (Access to Information) of the Constitution will be amended to reflect the following changes to Executive delegations as agreed by the Leader of the Council:

- (1) raise the financial limit on decisions that can be taken by officers to £300,000; and**
- (2) raise the value of a decision that requires publication via a delegated decision form to £100,000. This excludes policy decisions taken by Portfolio Holders which will continue to require publication.**

24 Non Executive amendments to the Constitution

Councillor Kirsty L Jones, Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee, proposed the report asking Council to approve changes to Articles 9 (Non-Executive Functions and Committees), 15 (Councillor Code of Conduct) and 18 (Contract Procedure Rules) of the Constitution. The proposed changes had been considered by the Standards and Governance Committee at its meeting on 22 June 2023 and were recommended to Council for approval. The report was seconded by Councillor Angela Kandola.

Resolved to:

- (1) amend Article 9 (Non-Executive Functions and Committees) of the Constitution to add the Terms of Reference for the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Appendix A to the report;**
- (2) amend Article 15 (Councillor Code of Conduct) of the Constitution to replace the Corporate Director of People with the Chief Executive as the individual who can designate training as mandatory; and**
- (3) approve a revised Article 18 (Contract Procedure Rules) of the Constitution, as set out in Appendix B to the report.**

25 Review of the Statement Of Licensing Policy

Councillor Audrey Dinnall, Chair of the Licensing Committee, proposed the report informing Council that, under the Licensing Act 2003, a new Statement of Licensing Policy is required to come into force from 7 January 2024 and asking Council to approve a draft Statement for release for public consultation. The outcome of the consultation and any proposed amendments to the Statement will be reported to Council at its meeting in November 2023 when Council will be asked to consider and approve the Statement of Licensing Policy. The report was seconded by Councillor Sajid Mohammed.

Resolved to approve the release of the draft Statement of Licensing Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, for public consultation.

26 Motion in the name of Councillor Cheryl Barnard

Councillor Cheryl Barnard moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Sam Gardiner:

Nottingham is a diverse, multi-cultural City in which, according to latest pupil statistics, 49% are from the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic community, 48.8% from the White Community and 2.1% are unclassified.

This Council notes that Black and Dual Heritage children are three times more likely to be permanently excluded and are over-represented in most stages of the youth justice system and more likely to be convicted or cautioned.

Nottingham City Council commits to encouraging a diverse and inclusive City where different cultures are valued and recognised.

Nottingham City Council resolves to:

- work with schools to create a diverse and anti-racist curriculum that recognises the contribution of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals and educates children and young people on Britain's role in upholding systemic racism;
- work with partners in our schools, academies, universities and teacher training institutions to encourage a teaching workforce and governing bodies that reflect the make-up of our City and reduce disproportionality in exclusions;
- better reflect Nottingham's diversity in books held in our libraries, our communications and our cultural events;
- continue our work with the police and justice system to reduce disproportionality in outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people.

Resolved to carry the motion.

27 Committee Membership Changes

The following changes to committee membership were noted:

- (1) Councillor Sajid Mohammed had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel
- (2) Councillor Zafran Khan had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Licensing Committee
- (3) Councillor Audra Wynter had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Regulatory and Appeals Committee
- (4) Councillor Gul Khan had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Regulatory and Appeals Committee

- (5) Councillor Michael Edwards had replaced Councillor Georgia Power as a member of the Joint Committee on Strategic Planning and Transport
- (6) Councillor AJ Matsiko had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee
- (7) Councillor AJ Matsiko had been appointed as a named substitute for the Standards and Governance Committee
- (8) Councillor AJ Matsiko had been appointed as a named substitute for the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee

The Meeting concluded at 5.05 pm