

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council Chamber - at the Council House

on 27 January 2025 from 6.00 pm - 7.45 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 Farzanna 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

63 Apologies for absence

Councillor Sulcan Mahmood – work commitments

Councillor Sajid Mohammed – unwell

Councillor Sam Harris – annual leave

Councillor Maria Watson – personal reasons

Councillor Adele Williams – personal reasons

64 Declarations of interests

None.

65 Questions from citizens

A citizen asked the following question of the Executive Member for Housing and Planning:

Rough sleeping

What is being done on the issue of sleeping rough and begging in shop doorways within the city?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and I thank the citizen for their question. Homelessness has been on the increase since the Tory government came into power in 2010 and there has been a 75% increase in the 14 years they were in power. However, in Nottingham, we have loads of services in place to tackle rough sleeping. We have an outreach team, who go out to rough sleepers and provide support and access to services. We have commissioned over 100 bed spaces for our rough sleepers. We also have a Housing Solutions Team who have a rough sleeping specialist who works with homeless sleepers to prevent homelessness and to provide pathways into much more long-term and secure accommodation. The Council has established coordinated joint partnership working with the police, homeless health team, mental health team, substance misuse specialist, and social workers in supporting rough sleepers on benefits with access to healthcare and housing and accommodation. I will urge anybody who is rough sleeping, when they come in contact with these teams, to please take us up on that offer and let us support you into long-term accommodation. I am pleased to announce as well to the Council that this Labour government is wanting to really tackle homelessness and get on top of it. This year we have seen an increase in our homeless budget from £337,000 under the Tories to £456,000 under this Labour government. We'll be using that money to do more preventative work, to stop people going out on the streets and being homeless, and if there's anybody who wants to support anyone who's rough sleeping, they can support charities like Framework, or donate to Street Aid, who provide support for our rough sleepers. Thank you.

66 Petitions from Councillors on behalf of citizens

Councillor Georgia Power presented a petition on behalf of 85 Bestwood and Top Valley residents asking the Council to reopen a public right of way.

67 To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of Council held on 11 November 2024

The minutes of the last meeting of Council held on 11 November 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

68 To receive official communications and announcements from the Leader of the Council and/or the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive made the following announcement:

Vicky Murphy was appointed as our new Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health, starting in November. As a registered and qualified mental health social

worker, Vicky brings over 28 years of experience to her role, including leading national initiatives through the Kings Fund and regional projects for the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. Vicky is a highly experienced transformation lead, known for her ability to transform services across various local authorities and health organisations. Her efforts have significantly improved performance and outcomes for residents while achieving and exceeding agreed savings targets.

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

It is with sadness that I report the death of former councillor Steve Young. Steve was elected to serve the Clifton South ward in 2015, where he served for a total of 4 years until 2019. During that time, he served on many different committees, including as a Chair of the Area 8 Committee.

It is also with sadness that I report the death of former councillor and Honorary Alderman Barrie Jackson. Barrie was elected to serve the Portland ward in 1991, where he served for a total of 12 years until 2003. During that time, he served on many different committees, including as a Vice-Chair of the Transportation Committee for 6 years. In May 2006 he was appointed as an Honorary Alderman in recognition of his eminent service.

A minute's silence was held.

69 Questions from Councillors

Local Government Settlement

Councillor Salma Mumtaz asked the following question of the Executive Member for Finance and Resources:

Can the Executive Member for Finance and Resources explain the impact that the increased Local Government Settlement is expected to have for Nottingham and the impact it will have on the Council's current financial position?

Councillor Linda Woodings replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Mumtaz for your question. Last Tuesday, at our Executive Board meeting, I was in a very unusual situation for any finance lead – to be able to present a report detailing an improvement in this council's financial position. As you know too well, for the past 14 years, this Council and our fellow citizens have faced harsh austerity measures under the Conservative government, and in Nottingham that equated to the tune of £100 million less per year in our un-ringfenced grant from Government, with the burden of additional cost for social care having to be passed on to the council tax payers of Nottingham, because unlike wealthier areas of the country, Nottingham has never had the luxury of being able to freeze council tax, or add anything less than the maximum allowable. So, after 14 years of brutal austerity, I feel very fortunate today to be able to announce that the provisional financial settlement for Nottingham states that we can expect an 8.5% increase in our core spending power, and that is 5% higher than the overall national rise, and obviously substantially more than the 1% that the Tories have announced. For Nottingham, 8.5% equates to an additional £31.6 million. Now, some of that is ringfenced for specific areas of service. For example, we should receive an extra £6.7 million for social care. We get more for the Better Care Fund – around £4 million. A new £3.5 million Prevention Grant for children's services, and a New

Homes Bonus of £1.1 million, which under the previous government, we thought would be stopped. Our Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant has been increased by £225,000, and as you heard, we get extra funding for homelessness and extra funding for SEND places. Further to this, £31.6 million is general grant. Overall, we have received an increase in our basic funding of £2 million, and that includes improvements to our Revenue Support Grant and a top-up to business rates that we've received. But, most significantly of all, Nottingham has received an extra £11.1 million of a new Recovery Grant, and that is a one-off measure for this coming year, to restore the deprivation top-up grants that have been systematically stripped away by former Tory governments over the last 14 years. And I am never going to stop reminding people that Rishi Sunak actually bragged about doing this. In Tunbridge Wells, during his leadership campaign, he said, to quote, "*I am changing the funding formula to give money to places like this*" – he means Tunbridge Wells – "*and I have taken it away from deprived urban areas*". So, because of those extra funds, and in addition to that the work of our improvement plan, and transformation in this council, last Tuesday I was able to announce a more favourable forecast for the coming four years. A re-forecast of our gap from 2025-2026 down from the £69 million we reported in March to £23.4 million, and over the four years coming, our budget gap has reduced down from a forecast gap of £172 million down to £56.8 million. Now, obviously we caveat that forecast because we don't know what exactly is going to happen over the next four years, and that reassessment is based on an informed estimate of the factors we now know and a risk assessment of the factors that we might encounter over the same period. So, although this is not sufficient for us to avoid using the Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) facility for the next year, it's still a huge distance from where we would have been under the Conservatives. We've asked for a £25 million EFS facility for next year, but I think it's worth acknowledging the massive progress that has taken place within this council to bring this gap down, starting with that extra £31.6 million from the new Labour Government. And so, although this new government hasn't been able to reverse 14 years of austerity in just 7 months, we know that we can look forward to a revised funding formula in the spending review next spring, which will seek to distribute government grants on a more equitable basis, and a much-needed multi-year funding commitment, so we can actually plan ahead further than 12 months. So, overall, it feels good to be able to report a better financial position to this Council meeting and in doing so I recognise the work of the financial leads before me who've had to put forward difficult and challenging decisions over the last 14 years in order to deliver our legal duty of setting a balanced budget. We're not out of the woods yet, but myself, the Leadership, and Executive, and this Nottingham Labour Party, are committed to putting the City Council back onto a stable financial footing. Now, rather than having to do this under a hostile Tory government, that started its tenure by halving funding to local government, we will be doing it with the help of a Labour government that believes in, and invests in, local services. Thank you.

Council Tax Support Scheme

Councillor Patience Ifediora asked the following question of the Executive Member for Finance and Resources:

Does the Executive Member for Finance and Resources agree that keeping our Council Tax Support Scheme at 80% shows that as a Labour authority we are protecting the most vulnerable residents of our city?

Councillor Linda Woodings replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Ifediora for your question. This question highlights one detail of our revised council tax support scheme which I'll be presenting in a paper later on in our Council agenda today. I'm pleased to report that thanks to the Council's improved financial position, we will be able to maintain the 80% discount level for all working-age claimants. Of course, because of the timetable for council tax bills, this is a matter which had to go out to consultation before our main budget consultation in order to meet our statutory requirement to set our council tax base by the end of this month. At the time of going out to consultation though, we had no knowledge of what our government settlement might be, but we did know that we had a £41 million structural deficit in our budget being filled by Exceptional Financial Support and faced with addressing this gap we consulted on a range of different levels of discount, down to even 30%. Ultimately now we face an improved financial situation, and so we've been able to listen to feedback, and we've been able to maintain that discount at 80% for all working-age people. That is in contrast to many other councils in extremely difficult financial positions, who are also facing severe financial crises and having to consult on reductions to their discount, but as I said in my previous answer we are benefitting from an improved financial settlement from government. We have other things that have been maintained as well, like the household support fund, which gives grants both to food banks, to our advice centres, and also pays for energy and supermarket vouchers for schoolchildren as well. We still have a long way to go, as I say, on our improvement plan, and we intend to keep that progress going. Thank you.

Library Provision and Service Delivery

Councillor Fozia Mubashar asked the following question of the Executive Member for Carbon Reduction, Leisure and Culture:

Does the Executive Member for Carbon Reduction, Leisure and Culture agree that the new plan for library provision and service delivery to 2030 shows Nottingham City Council's commitment to library access for people, and that it reflects the opinions of residents expressed through the consultation to keep libraries open?

Councillor Sam Lux replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you to Councillor Mubashar for her question. Yes, so when it comes to library provision, we've been working in really, really difficult circumstances, having agreed last year to reduce our revenue spend by 40%, which is really significant, in order to meet our legal requirements to set a balanced budget which, as we've heard, is very much linked to 14 years of Tory cuts and wastage and mismanagement, and which our new Labour government is trying to unpick and trying to repair the damage, but it's not going to happen overnight. However, I'm really happy to say that we've come a really long way compared to the proposal that went out to consultation last year, which included the definitive closure of four of our community library buildings. As Councillor Mubashar rightly pointed out, this Council cares very deeply about libraries, and an enormous amount of work has gone into coming up with an alternative vision which responds to the opinions that were expressed in the consultation, but which also stays within the necessary tighter envelope that we've been set. So, this new proposal which was passed by the Executive Board last week firstly retains Radford and Lenton Library within our core statutory offer rather than closing it, and this means that 77% of our households in Nottingham will remain within a 20-minute walking distance of a Council-run library, and Nottingham's award-winning public transport network of course will then further extend the accessibility and convenience of our library service to residents beyond

that 77%, and on top of this we've grown relationships with several voluntary sector organisations who've expressed an interest in occupying the three other library buildings in Aspley, Basford, and Bilborough, which were previously earmarked for closure. So, we're effectively now on a path to keeping all of our library buildings open. Our vision is to retain some of that traditional library provision and community access, but while also supporting new, valuable services for our communities, which the Council alone couldn't afford to run and wouldn't have the expertise to run and wouldn't have the expertise to run. Community organisations, unlike ourselves, are able to access external funding to fund building maintenance and can often respond more quickly and innovatively to communities' needs than we can. The new plans also include adding back 1,750 hours a year to the library service compared to the original proposal, and also responds to specific concerns expressed in the consultation by adjusting opening hours, including restoring Saturday morning hours, and I'm just really proud that unlike other councils, we haven't resorted to outsourcing en masse, and we haven't stripped our library service to the bare minimum. Instead, we've worked creatively to maintain a high level of in-house statutory library provision and establish new partnerships so we can work towards delivering high-quality multi-use facilities on top of that, and I think the most important thing to stress, which I'll end on, is that this renewed plan to 2030 allows us now finally to move away from this really challenging cycle of funding reductions so that the service can finally be set and strengthened for the coming half-decade and beyond. Thank you.

Local Government reorganisation

Councillor David Mellen asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Does the Leader agree with me that while Local Government reorganisation may represent an opportunity, we must work with our partners and neighbours to ensure that any reorganisation delivers for the residents of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Mellen for raising this vital question this afternoon. Councillors, we are all aware of the pressures councils have faced over the last decade. Significant growth in demand for services against the backdrop of severely reduced budgets. For Nottingham, these challenges are particularly acute. Tight city boundaries, a high proportion of homes in council tax band A or B, and an increase in demand for public services leaves us grappling with financial and structural pressures. This is why the government's devolution white paper represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, not just for administrative changes, but to deliver real improvements for the people we serve. Nottingham has a unique geography and identity. We are home to two world-class universities and a rich heritage. Yet financial constraints and outdated structures hinder our ability to deliver the services our communities need. While nearly 80% of Nottingham's properties are in band A and B, the figure is significantly lower in surrounding councils – just under 60% in Nottinghamshire County, and only 30% in Rushcliffe. This imbalance must be addressed to create a fairer and more sustainable system. Reorganisation is not just about cutting costs, or cutting red tape, or even having more governance. It is about better governance that reflects the realities of our communities today. By integrating services and decisions across housing, transport, and public health, we can reduce duplication, respond more effectively to residents' needs, and deliver long-term benefits. So yes, I agree with you Councillor Mellen that this process cannot succeed without genuine collaboration. Earlier this month I met with leaders from

Nottinghamshire councils to agree on broad principles of fairness, equity, and partnership. None of us sought this change, but the government's intentions are clear. To meet this challenge, we must put aside historic and political difference and rivalries, to commit to open and transparent dialogue, not just with each other, but with our residents. This a moment to reimagine Nottingham as a city where every child has access to excellent schools, every neighbourhood is safe, and every business has the support it needs to thrive. Other cities have shown that reorganisation can yield positive results when implemented with care and clear focus on outcomes. By listening to our communities and designing solutions that reflect their priorities we can ensure this process works for everyone. Lord Mayor, Nottingham has always been a city of energy, resilience, and innovation. From lacemaking to green technology, we have shown time and again that we can adapt to changing times. Let us approach this reorganisation not with hesitation but with ambition. It is an opportunity to create a fairer, greener, and more prosperous Nottingham, where progress is not just a vision but a lived reality for all. Thank you.

Social Housing inspection

Councillor Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall asked the following question of the Executive Member for Housing and Planning:

Could the Executive member for Housing and Planning report the results of the recent inspection by the Regulator for Social Housing and explain what they mean for our Council Housing Services?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you, Councillor Rehman-Wall, for your question. It was about this time last year that we were written to by the regulator and informed of our position and in October 24, the regulator came and did an inspection. The results of the inspection was what we expected, and there were no surprises on the report or in the discussions that we've had with the regulator. The judgement does reflect that there are many outstanding issues, many of which do require long-term planning to resolve those issues. However, before we had already started putting those improvements in place, well before the inspection started, we have established a tenant group made up of tenants of all backgrounds across our city, we responded to the stock condition survey, we've commissioned a new IT system which is currently being installed and tested at the moment that should help us to improve our repairs and data of reporting. We've created an Executive Board which I chair, and the Leader and Deputy, and of course my colleagues, the Executive Members for Adults and Children's sit on so we have a much more broader wider view of the housing services, as well as collaborating together with our other colleagues in the Council around the report, and I know Councillor Kotsonis has been working on that with me as well, and I thank him for that. We've invested £20 million into our frontline services, looking at improving technology, the equipment and training of our staff which will all benefit our tenants. The report wasn't all that bad, the regulator mentioned that we were very good at dealing with health and safety issues, anti-social behaviour, and the regulators acknowledged that we are on an improvement journey, that we brought the housing stock in-house very quickly and we've had to get to grips with a housing service at pace. So as long as we keep doing good with the plan and keep on improving and demonstrating to our tenants that service is getting better, the conversations I've had with the regulator they will be looking to work with us also mindful that they will want to inspect us within six months to a year

with the potential of upgrading us to a C2 or higher. So we are on that journey and service will look to improve for all our tenants in the coming months and years.

Road maintenance

Councillor Zafran Khan asked the following question of the Executive Member for Strategic Regeneration, Transport and Communications:

In light of an increase in the national budget for road maintenance including £500 million for fixing potholes in the next financial year, of which £70 million has been allocated to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) to distribute, can the Executive Member for Strategic Regeneration, Communications and Transport advise how soon might we learn how much is allocated to Nottingham city?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Khan, for your question. We are currently in discussions with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) to confirm the final road maintenance allocation for Nottingham City. However, I am pleased to report that we have been advised that we will receive £4.3 million for our Highway Maintenance Integrated Transport Block for 2025-26, an increase from the £3.1 million we received last year. Our Highways Services are already compiling the 2025-26 delivery program, prioritising work based on asset survey data, network hierarchy, and local factors. This will include resurfacing and maintenance treatments for both main roads and residential streets, with work scheduled to begin in April. In managing our roads, we rely on an effective inspection procedure to identify and assess risks, especially for vulnerable road users. As of the 24th of January, 44 pothole jobs were at 'job raised' status following customer reports or planned inspections. We have adopted a permanent repair policy to ensure lasting fixtures and better value for money. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our Highways team for their commitment to improving Nottingham roads' infrastructure. Their efforts include the successful delivery of the Streets for People programme having enhanced safety and accessibility across the city for residents, businesses, and visitors. We remain committed to improving Nottingham's roads and pathways and will continue working with EMCCA to maximise the benefits of this increased funding.

Broadmarsh site

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Can the Leader update the Chamber on plans for the future of the part derelict Broadmarsh site?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Clarke for your question. The Council is currently working with advisors to finalise a firm option for the future of the Broadmarsh site. I intend to present these proposals to the Executive Board in March this year. This site, as all Councillors will appreciate, is of an immense geographical and strategic importance to Nottingham and it is vital that we get this right. We have made steady progress towards delivering our vision for Broadmarsh and it was incredibly exciting last year to see that vision come to life. Our plans clearly demonstrate a commitment to transforming this site, attracting investment, and ensuring it becomes a cornerstone of Nottingham's future. The surrounding area has already undergone a dramatic transformation. The new central library, bus station, car park, pedestrianised Sussex Street, and the Collin Street play area are testament to the progress made. Additionally, plans are in place for the new NHS community

diagnostic centre in part of the former shopping centre, further cementing the area's potential. One of our most significant achievements is the Green Heart, a transformative public space already making an impact. I am pleased to report that we have provisionally secured £3.2 million funding from the East Midlands Combined County Authority to assist with the demolishing of the remaining parts of the former shopping centre structure east of the Green Heart. The grant was approved in principle in the EMCCA Board meeting in December, and the Council will submit the final business case by the end of January. If fully approved, we expect the funds to be available by the end of March, further advancing our ambition for the site. Lastly, I would like to share that the Green Heart development has been shortlisted for a nationwide public space award. This is well-deserved recognition for a project that has become an iconic addition to Nottingham's landscape, contributing to a thriving and diverse city centre. We remain fully committed to ensuring the Broadmarsh site becomes a flagship development that reflects Nottingham's resilience, innovation, and ambition.

Housing Condition Survey

Councillor Kirsty Jones asked the following question of the Executive Member for Housing and Planning:

Given the lack of understanding the Council has in the quality of decency of its housing stock, as highlighted by the Housing Ombudsman, can the Executive Member outline when a final condition survey will be completed to give visibility on the scale of repair issues that require rectification?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor and Councillor Jones for your question, but before I answer this I just want some clarity because I haven't seen a Housing Ombudsman report, but I've seen a report from the Housing Regulator, so which one is it? (*Clarification - "Regulator"*). Thank you. Make sure it is correct for future questions. In Summer '24 we started the stock condition survey of all of our 24.5 thousand properties. So far, we have completed 3,338 properties and we are on track to complete the survey by March 2026. But we are not waiting for the complete survey to be finished. Any property that highlighted with risk and needing repair work, we will schedule that in and get those repairs done as soon as they've been inspected. The information gathered in the survey will be put into a new asset management system which will feed into our HRO Capital Investment Programme, and we look forward to seeing that and we are putting money aside to ensure that we can invest in updating our properties and getting on top of the repairs.

District Heating Network

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Executive Member for Carbon Reduction, Leisure and Culture:

The Executive Member will be aware that significant investment is required in the Council's District Heating Network. Given the Council's strained financial position, can we confirm whether any Government funding is expected to fund improvements to the existing network and possible expansion?

Councillor Sam Lux replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Rule, for this question. As Councillor Rule knows, I am really excited personally about district heating as a means of expanding clean and green and affordable energy across the city, and Nottingham

does have the largest district heating network in the UK, and by some measures in Europe as well. So, we're therefore in a really great position to allow us to capitalise on the new Labour government's ambitious plans to grow district heating nationally from 3% of domestic heating supply currently to 20% by 2050, and I think it's fair to assume that the Labour government is going to want to see the Nottingham district heating network succeed and so I think we're optimistic about our prospects to access the government's significant grant funding available to support this growth. This does include the Green Heat Network Fund, which has £773 million to distribute by 2028. Already the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has invested £100,000 for a technical economic review of district heating for the city, having selected us as one of 20 local authority partners to participate in an initial study of the future growth of heat networks. We're also very encouraged to see government plans to bring in supportive legislation to provide new properties and waste heat sources to connect districts in areas designated as heat network zones, so in answer to Councillor Rule's question, Nottingham has considerable prospects in this space and I'm very much committed to investing in our relationship with government to make the most of any other opportunities ahead. Thank you.

Section 21 evictions

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Executive Member for Housing and Planning:

Can the Executive Member for Housing and Planning confirm how many former tenants of Nottingham City Homes Enterprises Ltd have presented as homeless to the Council, following the service of a Section 21 eviction, and the cost that this has placed on the Council?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor. Nottingham City Homes Enterprises Ltd served notice to 99 households of Nottingham City Homes. Nine people presented to housing solutions. One person required emergency accommodation at a cost of £11,600.

Voluntary groups at libraries

Councillor Kirsty Jones asked the following question of the Executive Member for Carbon Reduction, Leisure and Culture:

Whilst we welcome the proposed retention of those libraries that were expected to close, can the Executive Member outline how the voluntary groups that expressed an interest in taking over the running of libraries will be supported to ensure their long-term operation and not simply set up to fail from the outset?

Councillor Sam Lux replied as follows:

Thanks Lord Mayor and to Councillor Jones for her question. So, as Councillor Jones will have gathered from my previous answer, we are currently in live negotiations with several voluntary sector organisations which again are sensitive so I'm restricted in what I can say at this stage, but I can commit to coming back to Full Council to give a more detailed update. What I can say is that the discussions held today have been really constructive. We have opened dialogue to understand the organisations' needs in terms of suitable lease terms that place them in a better position to unlock funding support and we've also been working with them to develop strong, realistic business plans and discuss how the library service can offer in-kind support via training and access to particular resources and equipment that they might need. I think what's key here is the recognition on both sides that this isn't just about a transactional property

transfer but a new way of working with voluntary organisations, so the different ways for these sites to work for residents can evolve over time and it is going to take time to optimise but we hope it will eventually serve as a blueprint not just for the library service but for services more widely in the Council. As detailed in our Executive Board report, we also have identified some small pots of capital to invest in these sites so that these organisations can adapt them to support their long-term success. And finally, I'd like to assure Councillor Jones and all colleagues here today that I and the rest of the Executive are personally committed to making this work. We acknowledge that some of this is beyond our control but we're going to do everything in our power to find a solution that's not only viable but actually brings new considerable benefits to residents. Thank you.

70 Decisions taken under Urgency Procedures

Councillor Neghat Khan, Leader of the Council, proposed the report informing Council that, since the last report to Council in November 2024, there had been two decisions taken under the urgency provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and no decisions taken under the special urgency provisions within the Access to Information Procedure Rules. The report was seconded by Councillor Ethan Radford.

Resolved to note that

- (1) two decisions have been taken under urgency provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Article 11) of the Constitution since the last report to Council;**
- (2) no decisions have been taken under the special urgency provisions within the Access to Information Procedure Rules (Article 13) of the Constitution since the last report to Council.**

71 Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26

Councillor Linda Woodings, Executive Member for Finance and Resources, proposed the report seeking approval of the recommendation of the Executive Board of 21 January 2025 in relation to proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2025-26. The report was seconded by Councillor Neghat Khan.

Resolved to

- (1) note the consultation feedback attached to the report as Appendix 1;**
- (2) approve the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2025/2026 attached to the report as Appendix 2;**
- (3) delegate approval for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/2026 Regulations to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Resources.**

72 Appointments to Committees and Joint Bodies

Councillor Carole McCulloch, Lord Mayor and Chair of Council, proposed the report. The report was seconded by Councillor Liaqat Ali.

Resolved to

(1) note the relative strength of political groups on the Council is now as follows:

Labour Group 89.09% (49)

Nottingham Independents and Independent Group 7.27% (4)

There are two councillors who are not a member of a political group.

(2) note the allocation of seats on Council committees and joint committees to political groups as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;

(3) note that, in accordance with the allocation of seats to political groups as set out in Appendix 1, Councillor Salma Mumtaz is no longer a member of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority; and to appoint Councillor Andrew Rule as a member of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority.

73 Committee Membership Changes

It was noted that:

- a) Councillor Audra Wynter has been appointed as a member of the Licensing Committee;
- b) for all committees to which the Nottingham Independents and Independent Group is entitled to appoint to, all members of the Group not appointed as the committee member have been appointed as named substitutes;
- c) Councillor Shuguftah Qudoos has been removed as a member of the Licensing Committee, Regulatory and Appeals Committee, Joint Committee on Waste and Mineral Planning, and Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee, leaving vacant seats.

The Meeting concluded at 7.45 pm