

## NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council Chamber – at the Council House

on 13 October 2014 from 2.00 pm – 5.28 pm

### ATTENDANCE

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✓ Councillor Ian Malcolm (Lord Mayor)	
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✓ Councillor Liaqat Ali	✓ Councillor Ginny Klein
✓ Councillor Cat Arnold	✓ Councillor Dave Liversidge
✓ Councillor Mohammed Aslam	✓ Councillor Sally Longford
✓ Councillor Alex Ball	✓ Councillor Carole McCulloch
✓ Councillor Steve Battlemuch	✓ Councillor Nick McDonald
✓ Councillor Merlita Bryan	✓ Councillor David Mellen
✓ Councillor Eunice Campbell	✓ Councillor Thulani Molife
✓ Councillor Graham Chapman	✓ Councillor Eileen Morley
✓ Councillor Azad Choudhry	✓ Councillor Jackie Morris
✓ Councillor Alan Clark	✓ Councillor Toby Neal
✓ Councillor Jon Collins	✓ Councillor Bill Ottewell
✓ Councillor Georgina Culley	✓ Councillor Jeannie Packer
✓ Councillor Emma Dewinton	✓ Councillor Brian Parbutt
✓ Councillor Michael Edwards	✓ Councillor Ann Peach
✓ Councillor Pat Ferguson	✓ Councillor Sarah Piper
✓ Councillor Chris Gibson	✓ Councillor Mohammed Saghir
✓ Councillor Brian Grocock	✓ Councillor David Smith
✓ Councillor John Hartshorne	✓ Councillor Wendy Smith
✓ Councillor Rosemary Healy	✓ Councillor Timothy Spencer
✓ Councillor Nicola Heaton	✓ Councillor Roger Steel
✓ Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim	✓ Councillor Dave Trimble
✓ Councillor Glyn Jenkins	✓ Councillor Leon Unczur
✓ Councillor Sue Johnson	✓ Councillor Jane Urquhart
✓ Councillor Carole Jones	✓ Councillor Marcia Watson
✓ Councillor Alex Norris	✓ Councillor Sam Webster
✓ Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Michael Wildgust
✓ Councillor Neghat Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Malcolm Wood

## **51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Cat Arnold – non Council business  
Councillor Alex Ball – non Council business  
Councillor Eunice Campbell – non Council business  
Councillor Azad Choudhry – non Council business  
Councillor Carole McCulloch – non Council business  
Councillor Sue Johnson – non Council business  
Councillor Gul Khan – non Council business

Councillor Emma Dewinton informed the meeting that she would have to leave the meeting prior to its conclusion owing to other Council business.

## **52 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM CITIZENS**

### **Questions from citizens**

No questions from citizens were received.

### **Petitions from Councillors on behalf of citizens**

Councillor Glyn Jenkins submitted two petitions:

- (i) on behalf of 21 signatories requesting a residents' parking scheme on Robins Wood Road;
- (ii) on behalf of 74 signatories requesting a residents' parking scheme on Southwold Drive.

## **53 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.**

## **54 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chief Executive reported the following:

### **City of Football**

On 15 September, Nottingham was named as Sport England's City of Football, beating both Manchester and Portsmouth. Nottingham will receive £1.6 million to get more people in the city playing football. Nottingham clinched the title by mobilising an impressive group of private, public and voluntary sector partners from both inside and outside the traditional football family, to get more people playing all kinds of football regularly.

### **East Midlands in Bloom Awards**

The East Midlands in Bloom 2014 Awards were announced on 17 September at Lark Hill Village in Clifton. Nottingham won the Gold medal in the Best Large City Award, this was the 21st Gold Award the City had achieved in this category. There was a Silver Gilt Award for the Meadows Urban Community Gardens, a Silver Gilt Award for Lark Hill Best Village Award and a Silver Gilt Award for the Business Improvement District area. There were also 41 Community Group winners of “It’s Your Neighbourhood Awards”.

### **Nottingham’s Parks and Open Spaces**

Nottingham’s Parks and Open Spaces Team scooped the Best Parks Service in the UK award at the APSE Awards night on 12 September; this was for the third year running.

### **Nottingham City museums and galleries**

Nottingham City Museums and Galleries is one of two UK museums to have been selected by the Victoria and Albert Museum for their Photographs Curator Training Programme. This two-year pilot programme, with support from the Arts Fund, will train and develop the skills of recipients to become curators of art photography. This award will help to raise awareness of the collection and make it more widely accessible. The partnership between the V&A and Nottingham will run throughout 2015 and lead to on-line resources and a new display at Nottingham Castle.

### **Neil Smith - Lord Mayor’s Sergeant**

Neil Smith, the Lord Mayor’s Sergeant, will be retiring from his duties in November after 23 years’ service. Neil joined the Council in July 1992 as the Lord Mayor’s attendant before becoming the Lord Mayor’s Sergeant 7 years later. Neil has always carried out his duties with great pride and the Council wished him well in his retirement.

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Georgina Culley and Councillor Brian Grocock all spoke in tribute to Neil Smith.

### **55 REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER ON WELFARE REFORM ONE YEAR ON**

Following a vote, Council agreed to vary the order of business under Standing Order 5, to consider the report on Welfare Reform as item 7 on the agenda.

The Deputy Leader submitted a report entitled “Welfare Reform – One Year On”, as set out on pages 27 to 42 of the agenda.

Contributions were made to the debate by the following external speakers:

- Chris Deardon, Advice Nottingham
- Ferg Slade, Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service

- Reverend Liam O'Boyle, the Church of England, Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham
- Nigel Webster, Bulwell and Bestwood food bank

**RESOLVED to**

- (1) **note the findings and outcomes from “Welfare Reform, One Year On”, as detailed in appendix 1 to the report;**
- (2) **note the impact welfare reform is having on the citizens of Nottingham.**

**56 QUESTIONS**

**Allegations of abuse of children in Nottingham**

Councillor Georgina Culley asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:

Would the Leader of the Council support and commit this Council to an Independent Inquiry into long standing allegations of abuse of children in care in Nottingham and, with the cooperation of County Council colleagues, Nottinghamshire as well?

Councillor Jon Collins replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I say that I am a little surprised that Councillor Culley has asked this question. Three weeks ago when I Met Mr Summers to discuss his concerns at Loxley House rather than have him yet again disrupt my advice surgery, Councillor Culley attended and asked me this question and I gave her an answer.

It was the same answer reported by the Nottingham Post in their report of that meeting two days later and it's the same answer that has for some time been on the Council website. It is the same answer Councillor Culley would have been given had she asked that question at any of the officer briefings she and her Group have repeatedly been offered by the Council's Head of Children's Services and Head of Legal Services but as of yet, has failed to take up. So, four weeks ago I agreed with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Leader of County Council that we should all support an inquiry into historic allegations of abuse in Nottingham's children's homes up to the mid 1970s, when they were the City Council's responsibility, and in the 80s and 90s when they were run by the County Council and since 1998, when they were again the City Council's responsibility.

Councillor Culley either has an extraordinarily bad memory, has forgotten she asked me that question and, by coincidence, failed to read the article in the Nottingham Post, click on the link on the Council's website or take up the opportunity to ask officers. Or, she is seeking to make party political capital on what is a most important and sensitive issue and unfortunately, I think it's the latter.

**Garden waste collection**

Councillor Roger Steel asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Community Services:

This time last year, as we approached the end of scheduled Garden Waste collections, I asked whether the Portfolio Holder would consider, at the request of many residents, whether or not we could be more flexible with our garden waste collection scheduling to reflect the fluctuating nature of our climate. Well, again we still have leaves on the trees, and again we are likely to see the service removed before autumn leaf fall occurs. Will the Portfolio Holder assure the Council that she is listening to these residents and that there will be an extension of the service or special arrangements made to ensure we cover this peak time for garden waste?

Councillor Nicola Heaton replied as follows:

Thank you very much Lord Mayor and I would like to thank Councillor Steel for his question and to thank him for re-writing his question which he has posed three times before – it makes it much easier for me to give him an answer.

I'm afraid I will have to refer him to the answer I gave last year because the position on garden waste collections has not changed in the last year, except of course, that the government has once again cut the Council budget and that this year we have £25.5 million less in our budget than last year. So, as I explained last year, the decision to reduce garden waste collection to a seven month season, April to October inclusive, was taken by the Council when setting the 2011/12 budget.

As councillors will know, the Council has seen hundreds of millions of pounds taken out of its budget by the Tory government and we are being forced to make some service reductions such as this in order to balance our budget. As leaders of the city, we have taken decisions on what to prioritise and where we have been forced to reduce services we have done so intelligently. So, in this case, we looked at when garden waste was presented in deciding what service to offer our residents. Historically, 82% of garden waste tonnage was collected in months April to October and only 18% between November and March. We therefore made the decision, painful but ultimately sensible, not to provide this service in these months. I will be explicit – five months of the year is 42% of a full year's service and costs and yet citizens were only putting out 18% of the years garden waste. In the months that we offer, we are collecting about 82% of the year's garden waste for only 58% of the cost of a full year's service.

I very much appreciate residents' concerns about the lengthening gardening season however, I must once again argue that it is simply not practical or affordable to extend or vary the months that we collect garden waste and I would have to argue that bringing this issue up every October does amount to asking for an extension rather than a variation of the service. Councillor Steel does not stand up here in full Council every March or April asking for the beginning of collections to be delayed to compensate for collections in November, nor of course, have the Tory Group ever said how they would pay for this proposal or included extended garden waste collections in their alternative budget. Any extension of the garden waste collection would cost £70,000 for a single extra month and in light of massive budget cuts we are forced to make I do not believe that this is something that the Council can afford to prioritise.

Let me make clear, we do provide other options to people. If they bag leaf fall, it will be collected with the residual collection or alternatively I would encourage residents

to look at home composting or using the household waste and recycling centre at Lenton. I would also like to remind Councillor Steel that in all of our neighbouring authorities, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling, people have to pay for their garden waste recycling bin and this is not a choice we have made for people in Nottingham. I think we have the right solution for Nottingham citizens in the current budget context and in the light of a continual attack on local authorities by the Tories in government.

In the circumstances, I would suggest that this Council is making intelligent and pragmatic decisions about how to manage massive Tory cuts. I do look forward to the Tory Group asking me the same question next year, if there are any of them left after May, however I must warn them that they would probably receive the same answer. In March, we will agree a budget for next year which will see another £30 million taken out of this Council. If Councillor Steel would like a more flexible service, with more months of operation, can I suggest that he ask his government to not only stop implementing draconian cuts that hit cities and areas of deprivation hardest, but to reverse them. Until then, I feel that asking the same question again and again will not meet with a different answer.

### **Late night levy**

Councillor Roger Steel asked the following question of the Chair of the Licensing Committee:

Could the Chair of the Licensing Committee confirm how many premises have, since the decision to introduce the Late Night Levy was made, reduced their licensing hours and ceased serving alcohol after midnight, avoiding having to pay the levy? What does this mean in terms of loss of revenue to the scheme and in terms of impact upon the city's night time economy? If it is having a detrimental effect, will this Council repeal this tax?

Councillor Brian Grocock replied as follows:

Lord Mayor, can I thank Councillor Steel for his very timely question. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 explains why the Late Night Levy was needed, the coalition government agreed to include the commitment to permit local councils to charge more for a late night levy to help pay for additional policing and cleaning. We believe that it's right, that businesses who profit from selling alcohol into the night-time economy contribute towards these costs, rather than relying on tax payers in communities to bear the full costs.

At a recent Licensing Committee at Nottingham City Council, your representative on that Committee voted in favour of the recommendation of the Late Night Levy to be presented to full Council. In reference to your question as to how many people have opted out – 127 premises out of a possible 309 have already applied to vary their licence to hours which would not be caught by the Late Night Levy. Some have opted to begin immediately, others do not want their reduced hours to begin until the levy year starts which is 1 November 2014. A more accurate projection will be available after 14 November 2014 because we have not valued the cost at this moment in time. Lord Mayor, the Council's choice to vary the terms of the levy or to cease the levy will require a full public consultation. It should be noted that this is a snapshot and, therefore, with applications being submitted on a daily basis we do not know

how many we will have before 1 November. The true cost will not be available to us until November 2015.

Lord Mayor, the levy is working and it has worked in that we have significantly fewer licenses open beyond midnight and as a result we will, as a Council, incur less cost related to policing and cleaning. Ward councillors often have to deal with complaints about the late night openings of licensed premises so it is now less of a problem in some of those areas. The levy is about getting a contribution to those extra costs incurred by the Authority from the licensing premises operating and staying open beyond midnight. If there are less of those the cost would be less and a good result too.

A footnote to Councillor Steel's question is that we will not repeal the Late Night Levy, it is doing its job as we had set out for it to do and we will continue to use the Levy to support our services.

### **Central College**

Could the Portfolio Holder please update the Council on the move by Central College to a new campus alongside the former Popham Street railway arches site, and if any progress is being made to purchase the present ugly sixties' buildings of Central College on Maid Marian Way for demolition, in order to open up the wonderful vista of Castle Rock for the benefit of Nottingham residents and visitors alike?

Councillor Nick McDonald replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Steel for his question. The City Council is working closely with Central College and New College Nottingham to develop a skills hub on the site to the east of Broadmarsh Centre. The proposals, as councillors will be aware, is to provide a skills hub from which both Central College and New College Nottingham will provide further education and learning to young people in Nottingham. I must say, the fact that we were able to ensure that this is a top skills project for the whole of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership area is testament to the hard work of a number of people, including my colleagues in the executive and officer team. It is also testament to the fact that in Nottingham we have a very clear economic agenda and growth plan and the development of skills in this city is core to that.

This will be a landmark development for learners and the city and it will catalyse regeneration to the south of the city. A skills hub in the heart of our city centre is absolutely vital to the future success of young people in the city. Councillor Steel asked specifically about the present building and I don't think that there is a person in this chamber or indeed the city who doesn't have a view of the buildings on Maid Marian Way and the old Castle College in particular. It is ugly, it does hide the Castle walls and I agree, it needs to go. I can therefore confirm to Councillor Steel that as part of this project, we are in detailed discussions with Central College about the exchange of land which is owned by the City Council at Broadmarsh east and land occupied by Central College on Maid Marian Way. These are complex negotiations and they are not concluded and there is some way to go but can I give Councillor Steel my assurance, and can I give my personal assurance to all in this chamber, that demolition of Castle College is a key aim in those negotiations and a key reason

for prioritising this project. We all want to see the city regenerated and improved and we will take whatever opportunity we can to ensure that we achieve that aim.

### **Money for potholes**

Councillor Liaqat Ali asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation:

Would the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation help Council to understand whether the “new” money for potholes compensates for other coalition cuts to Highways budgets?

Councillor Jane Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Ali for your question. I know that the condition of our local roads is something that is of concern to many councillors and the announcement of what may seem like additional money caused not only the Nottingham Post but the BBC to get rather over-excited but also local members to understandably hope that real improvements could be made. Sadly, the funding for highways maintenance is not as straightforward as that. In Nottingham, we have broadly two avenues of funding for highways maintenance. Firstly, our own revenue budget and local transport plan allocations. I am sure that councillors in this chamber will be very familiar with the severe reductions that we have faced in revenue budget terms, some of which Councillor Heaton has already rehearsed in her earlier answer.

Under the Conservative and Lib-Dem coalition since 2010, our overall revenue budget has fallen by over £71 million and of course, the likes of Dorset and Windsor's settlements grew. Given the pressures on budget areas like caring for our vulnerable elderly and ensuring that our children are properly protected it is then no surprise that hard decisions have had to be taken and this means, in terms of highways budgets, that our revenue funding provision has shrunk, from £3.5 million to £2.5 million since 2010. We used to receive Road Safety Grant money, some of which was used for road safety schemes but also had the add-on benefit of improving highway condition. We used to get money to improve roads that once formed part of the trunk road network. Neither of these separate funding streams exist anymore.

Local Transport Plan maintenance allocations have fallen. In 2010, we received £2.6 million and this year £1.7 million so both of these significant reductions in the funding available to us has affected our ability to keep our roads in a good a state as we would like. I have to say that, in Nottingham, we are not doing too badly in terms of the way that we manage our road and transport system overall and there will be more on that later this week when the results of a rather important national survey are published.

So, the government has taken away around £2.3 million from us but have then made sporadic allocations of much vaunted additional funding in response to various episodes of bad weather, most recently announcing the pothole fund. There are some issues with this, first and most importantly, the money being trumpeted as extra, which ministers congratulate themselves for their great generosity, is, of course, not extra at all because it is not a greater sum than the reductions that we have experienced. The government have taken away the loaf of bread and are giving

it back in slices but never amounting to the whole loaf. Secondly, by cutting the regular amounts and then announcing piece-meal additions, our ability to plan work coherently is affected and our ability to make the most of allocations as we have frequently done in the past by combining with other works we have got planned is reduced. The Public Accounts Committee recently rightly criticised this stop-start funding saying that it was unhelpful for local authorities and an inefficient use of money.

Finally, the most recent pothole funding announced, with great fanfare by the Prime Minister and Eric Pickles MP, was a fund that councils had to bid into so that costs us, in terms of making the bid, and left us uncertain about whether we would get any sum or no money from the process. The amount we received in the end, about £340,000 leaves our overall maintenance allocation for this year significantly down on the 2010 level of money that we had. The strictures that come with the pothole allocation are considerable again, a government that tells us that it is committed to localism and now, it seems, to a devolution of powers, feels that it is appropriate to allocate money to a democratically accountable local council but to tell us precisely how we have to spend it. Eric Pickles is clearly an expert in Nottingham's road systems and highways repairs and from Whitehall it is clearly possible for him to determine the best value spending approach for our city. This, again, adds to the bureaucracy and prevents us, as I said earlier, from doing the effective combining with other works as we have done in previous years which enabled us to make amounts of money go further.

So, whilst additional money is always welcome, do not be under any illusion that this outbreak of generosity or largesse is even a recognition of the pressure upon local highways. It is just the government trying to capture some headlines when they have taken away far more than has subsequently been given back. We will use it wisely and we will do our best to keep our highways in good condition but the overall revenue pressures on us as a Council and the reductions in government funding are not made up for by this sleight of hand.

### **Essential public services**

Councillor Sarah Piper asked the following question of the Deputy Leader of the Council:

In light of Tory promises to both cut taxes and pay off the deficit, does the Deputy Leader, like me, live in fear of the devastation that another five years of Conservative Government would bring to essential public services?

Councillor Graham Chapman replied as follows:

An interesting question, what is even more interesting is what happened at the Conservative Party Conference earlier this month. On the Monday of the Conservative Conference, George Osborne stood up in front of the assembled masses and announced that the cupboard was bare. Austerity was the order of the day, so much so that he would reluctantly have to freeze the benefits of the poor, including the working poor, in order to raise the much needed £3.2 billion. He threw in £150 million of benefits to the better-off pensioners in so doing, but it was a 'no money in the piggy-bank' speech.

By Wednesday, all of the doom and gloom had been dispersed and David Cameron announced £7.2 billion worth of tax cuts. George Osborne was mean and hit the poor for the sake of the economy whereas David Cameron was full of generosity and was dishing out money to everyone - in the space of two days. Now that the dust has settled, we can see what had really happened, it wasn't quite everyone who got something out of these arrangements, if you are not in work or are earning less than £12,500 you lost a great deal. If you were working and earning up to £12,500 and you had children, you lost out. If you are disabled and on benefits, even if working, you lost more still and if you had a disabled child you lost even more. However, if you are earning over £42,000 you gained around £2,000 per annum. It is the Tory version of fairness.

The consequence is that there are 11,500 families in Nottingham less well off as a consequence and are likely to lose out as a result of Conservative plans. It was also interesting to ask what happened between Monday, when we were broke, and Wednesday when we were able to dish out £7.2 billion munificence. Was it a well coordinated rabbit that David Cameron pulled out of the hat or was it something else? It is worth asking because it reveals much about another aspect of this announcement. Rather than a rabbit pulled out of a hat, it was a turkey, weighing about £7.2 billion. It was unfunded and possibly uncoded, a classic piece of 'back of a fag-packet' budgeting and for the first time in my life I felt a twinge of sympathy for George Osborne, however it did not last long. What happened was that his speech of undiluted austerity did not go down well and David Cameron had to find something fast with which to bribe the electorate. Fiscally prudent Osborne was out trumped by fiscally incompetent Cameron.

This was a very big mistake in my view as there are two very serious consequences, firstly, although Councillor Culley believes that the economy and the budget is getting into shape, there are some really serious problems. The budget reductions are £59 billion out on the estimate of 2010, you are failing in your targets. The overall deficit – people think it has come down, it hasn't – the overall debt has gone up from £1 billion to £1.450 billion under the Conservative government. The other problem is that tax take is down because of the level of self employment and a lot of people on very low incomes going into self employment for various reasons. North Sea oil income is predicted to substantially reduce and now we have the announcement last week of a new target of balancing the current account by 2018/19. It is also ruling out tax increases to do it.

Now, either this is a fantasy world or it is going to have a devastating impact on public finances and on councils in particular, especially given that the NHS is ring-fenced. I am also told that there is a chance of ring-fencing the defence budget so, there are only a few places where you can ask for money and we are talking about £37.8 billion over four years. Actually, what I think is that there will be a bit of both, a bit of fantasy and they will extend it but there will also be some very harsh punishment.

There is a second consequence to the announcement; no longer can the Conservatives blame others for fiscal irresponsibility. They have missed their financial targets, they have presided over a 45% increase in total debt, they have just announced £7 billion worth of 'give-aways', mainly to the better off, without knowing how they are going to be paid for and no one believes the target for balancing the

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current account. It actually makes Labour look like a paragon of fiscal rectitude and that takes some doing.

### **Visitors at Wollaton Park**

Councillor Steve Battlemuch asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture:

Could the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture outline the visitor numbers for Wollaton Park this summer?

Councillor Dave Trimble replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Battlemuch for his question. Given the debate on welfare reform earlier today, it struck me that this question might seem a little less important but we shouldn't forget how important our parks and open spaces are to people living in poverty, including single parent families. They are absolutely vital to those suffering from mental health issues and can exist as a safe haven and a sanctuary where people can escape from the real world, if only temporarily. The playgrounds at our parks offer children endless fun away from the real world, free of charge. Wollaton Park, like many of our parks in the city continues to see an increased number of visits and this is down to the investment made in our parks by this Labour Council which we have made year on year.

The figures collected for visits just to the hall are published annually as part of the Visit England Survey and they will soon show an increase in hall attendance alone, of over 38% since 2011. It is always difficult to accurately predict the casual park usage, but when we examine the other quantifiable elements of the park such as attendance at events and activities we can use a number of assumptions to estimate a general user figures for the period during the summer months between (April – September). They equate to a park only visitor figure of approximately 247,000 which when combined with user of the hall gives a total visitor numbers of 455,000 for the six months. We believe there are a number of reasons for this rise; firstly, the Batman effect. Since Wollaton Hall was used as a location for Wayne Manor in the Batman film *The Dark Knight Rises*, both Nottingham City Council and Experience Nottinghamshire have used this to maximum effect for publicity and promotion. This has helped to attract new visitors to the site, including visitors from overseas.

Secondly, the visitor experience. The service has concentrated a lot of effort on boosting events and activities on site, increasing opportunities for people to stay and explore longer. We have opened up new rooms and tours at Wollaton Hall which have been well received. Thirdly, events – this year, Wollaton Park not only played host to the well-established Splendour Festival, but was also the venue for a brand new festival, No Tomorrow festival, outdoor theatre and an outdoor cinema which screened the *Dark Knight Rises*. The site has hosted GB Archery Championships since 2013 and many other excellent events.

Fourthly, improved facilities on site – a new children's playground opened earlier this year in time for the school holidays. This new facility has attracted lots of new visitors to Wollaton as well as pleasing regular existing visitors. In addition, on-going

improvements have also taken place to the stable yard café with improved menu options and opening times.

So Lord Mayor, to summarise, the financial investment made by this Labour Council and the human investment put in by our parks team has reversed the national decline in people using parks which goes right back to the Tories introducing compulsory competitive tendering. This Labour Council cares about its parks and the investment being made is bringing people flocking back to our green and open spaces. Wollaton Hall and Park is a great example of that. The wide range of events, including tours, cinema screenings, outdoor theatres, an excellent new playground and great national sporting competitions has vastly increased the number of visitors to the park.

### **Workplace Parking Levy**

Councillor Michael Edwards asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation:

Could the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation comment on reports that the Mayor of London Boris Johnson is exploring the possibility of introducing a workplace parking levy, and would she be willing to share Nottingham's expertise with him?

Councillor Jane Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Edwards for your question and thank you, particularly, for taking up the theme of asking a question about the Workplace Parking Levy, as the Conservatives seem to have forgotten to do so this time. I was delighted to read in the London Standard recently that Boris Johnson was considering introducing a workplace parking levy and of course, that would follow in the tradition of him taking his transport policies from Labour authorities, such as the congestion charge which paid for much of Transport for London's provision which was of course, planned by the Labour Mayor Ken Livingstone and even the so called, 'Boris bikes' are actually 'Ken's cycles'. It is perhaps no surprise that he would look to probably the best local transport authority outside of London for further inspiration.

Boris Johnson is clearly ahead of the Conservative Party locally who still oppose the levy and at a recent call-in panel, continued to express a view that the levy should be scrapped without giving us any idea how they would intend to pay for the projects funded by the levy. From the earlier answer given by Councillor Heaton it is clear that the Tories in Nottingham like to make unfunded spending plans.

In Nottingham, the UK's first workplace parking levy has been implemented successfully with 100% compliance from liable businesses and the City Council has attracted more businesses to the city since the levy started operating than in the five years prior to its introduction. No doubt that having one of the best public transport networks in the country, currently being enhanced by WPL funds, plays a part in the decision for businesses to relocate here. It is not surprising that other local authorities are expressing an interest in this scheme. Although relatively recently introduced, the levy has already contributed towards the transformation of Nottingham Station, to our electric bus fleet, bus services between hospitals and key employment sites and the two new tram lines that we are building.

It is delivering the major transport priorities which local businesses have told are vital to their's and the city's economic success. The priorities for local businesses include the tram, improvements to the Station and to the A453. The levy allows us to deliver these priorities for a relatively modest charge levied only on the city's largest employers most importantly, with businesses knowing that their relatively small investment – every £1 raised by the levy helps to lever in £3 of government funding. Once the schemes it funds are complete that will deliver £10 of economic benefits to the city and even during construction of the tram, businesses are already starting to see some of the benefits the scheme is unlocking with £150 million worth of contracts and the creation of thousands of construction jobs in our local area. The value of contracts to city based firms already dwarfs the amount paid in WPL. The careful way in which we have used our employer hub has meant that many young people have been given the chance of training and apprenticeships as part of the delivery of the tram project meaning that even when these projects have been completed those people will have the skills and experience to obtain work on other local projects or perhaps further afield.

With the levy, only 5% of funds raised go towards administration costs compared with 20% like London's congestion charge which, of course, makes it a very viable proposal to tackle congestion by getting employers to manage and potentially reduce the amount of cheap workplace parking they provide and generate an income stream for investment available for major public transport infrastructure. The WPL is also helping Nottingham City Council attract investment into improving its transport provision it would have not been otherwise able to attract, particularly given the shrinking budgets local authorities receive from central government which we heard about earlier this afternoon in my earlier answer. There is no reason why the levy couldn't work in this way for other local authorities. It is a valuable tool, making new public transport projects possible, supporting existing services and infrastructure which can in turn reduce congestion and the burden on road network.

Nottingham City undertook careful research in terms of the WPL legislation and operation in the creation of its own scheme and that care has paid off in terms of the positive way in which the scheme has embedded into the city. We would therefore be happy to work with London or any other authority to help them understand the benefits which a similar scheme could bring them and share our expertise in implementing and operating the scheme, to help them reduce the time and cost of introducing their own levy schemes. We think we have a valuable project to offer other authorities and we welcome their interest.

## **57 REPORT OF THE LEADER ON DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES**

The Leader submitted a report on decisions taken under the urgency procedures, as set out on pages 23 to 26 of the agenda.

**RESOLVED to note the urgent decisions taken, as follows:**

**(1) Urgent decisions (exempt from call-in)**

<u>ref</u>	<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Reasons for urgency</u>
1637	01/09/14	D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Growing Places Fund Loan Approvals	£238,000	To enable the release of funds in a timely manner following approval.
1652	15/09/14	Transfer of Banking Services - Preparation of Financial Systems	£45,500	Urgent approval is sought in order to meet the Council's deadline.
1653	16/09/14	Approval of costs for an adults care package	Exempt	To allow for a timely implementation of the decision.
1654	16/09/14	Approval of costs for an adults care package	Exempt	To allow for a timely implementation of the decision.
1670	26/09/14	Taking a 15 year lease of 24-32 Carlton Street & 31- 33 Warser Gate, followed by the grant of a 15 year sub-lease to GameCity Ltd	Exempt	To allow for a timely implementation of the decision.
1673	30/09/14	Tender to Oldham Borough Council for Billing and Metering Services	Exempt	To allow for a timely implementation of the decision.

**(2) Key decisions (special urgency procedure)**

<u>Date of decision</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Value of decision</u>	<u>Decision Taker</u>	<u>Reasons for special urgency</u>
30/09/14	Tender to Oldham Borough Council for Billing and Metering Services	Exempt	Portfolio Holder for Energy and Sustainability	To allow for a timely implementation of the decision.

**58 REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER ON THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE 2014/15 TO 2018/19**

The Deputy Leader submitted a report on the Capital Programme Update 2014/15 to 2018/19, circulated separately to the agenda.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) to approve the proposed Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19 of £683.098 million;**
- (2) that individual schemes be subject to separate approval in accordance with the constitution and scheme of delegation prior to expenditure being incurred;**
- (3) to apply and adhere to the following Accountability Principles:**
  - new projects (unable to cover their costs) added to the programme, will result in an existing project being removed or amended;**
  - all projects must have a robust and viable full business case, which considers and includes whole life costing and revenue implications;**
  - all schemes will be subject to robust and deliverable business plans and models which demonstrate the necessary return on investment required;**
  - the decision to progress schemes will be dependent on securing the stated level of external funding or grant as appropriate;**
  - new projects will be considered where the Council can make a return on investment;**
  - where new sources of external funding/grants become available, the programme will be revisited;**
  - all schemes will be subject to an independent internal 'Gateway review process'.**
- (4) to note the potential funding required as set out in section 6.5 of the report which includes £222.700 million of additional prudential borrowing and the potential annual return of £20 million required to fund the associated borrowing;**
- (5) to note the associated risks of the proposed investments as set out in section 7 of the report.**

**59 CITY COUNCIL ON 8 DECEMBER 2014**

**RESOLVED to hold a meeting of City Council at 2.00 pm on Monday 8 December 2014.**

**60 EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED to note the decision to hold an Extraordinary meeting of Council on 16 October 2014 to consider the installation of Carl Froch as a Honorary Freeman of the City of Nottingham.**