

## NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held in the Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 8 January 2020 from 2:00pm to 4:05pm**

#### **Membership**

##### Present

Councillor Carole McCulloch (Chair, items 36-41)  
Councillor Cate Woodward (Chair, items 41-42)  
Councillor Azad Choudhry  
Councillor Maria Joannou  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan  
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis  
Councillor Jane Lakey  
Councillor Ethan Radford  
Councillor Andrew Rule

##### Absent

Councillor Anne Peach  
Councillor Georgia Power

#### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Zaimal Azad	- Hate Crime Officer
Philip Broxholme	- Performance and Intelligence Manager, Community Safety
Nicki Jenkins	- Director for Economic Development
Councillor Neghat Khan	- Portfolio Holder for Early Years, Education and Employment
Councillor Rebecca Langton	- Portfolio Holder for Communities
Adrian Mann	- Governance Officer
Superintendent Matt McFarlane	- Nottinghamshire Police
Councillor Sam Webster	- Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre
Laura Wilson	- Senior Governance Officer

#### • **CHAIR**

As Councillor Anne Peach, the Chair of the Committee, was absent, Councillor Carole McCulloch, the Vice-Chair, chaired the meeting.

#### **36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Anne Peach	-	unwell
Councillor Georgia Power	-	unwell

### **37 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **38 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **39 DISCUSSION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE, GROWTH AND THE CITY CENTRE**

Councillor Sam Webster, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre, gave a presentation on the current position in relation to Council services and budget, his key priorities and activities for the current year, and a look ahead to the future. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the Council is managing a gap in the upcoming budget, which has been the position for a number of years and is a significant problem for urban local authorities. £15.9million is required in savings, so there is a substantial effort to increase income and reduce costs. Currently, plans for the creation of £13million in savings is out for public consultation. In addition, 'Big Ticket' boards are working within every Council department to carry out a strategic overview and drive further efficiencies and savings. Policies are in place to ensure financial resilience and manage risks to the budget but, as much of this is focused on meeting the Council's statutory responsibilities for children's and adult's social care, there is very little financial flexibility. Currently, it is difficult to introduce effective financial planning beyond the short-term;
- (b) steps to close the budget gap also include an increase in Council Tax of 3.99%. The Council will receive around £1million in income for every 1% increase in Council Tax, which represents roughly £3 for each Council Tax payer. In comparison to many other local authorities, the further revenue generated by a 1% Council Tax increase is relatively low. Of this additional income, half is required to support the statutory provision of services related to adult social care. However necessary, this represents a further financial burden on many families that are already hard-pressed;
- (c) the funding of social care is an issue of national concern, as more people are now living with ill health and social care needs for longer periods of their life. It is extremely important to deliver the right support and services to these people but, as provision is funded largely by the local Council Tax payer, the funding model is not consistent across the country, while the need continues to grow;
- (d) a revenue grant of just under £25million is provided by the Government for supporting day-to-day services, with some one-off grants, but this funding continues to be cut. At a national level, the funding to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and to the Department for Transport has decreased, which has a knock-on effect for local authorities;

- (e) other central funds are available through a competitive bidding process, but this money is ring-fenced for designated capital projects and cannot be used as part of the Council's general funds. This can create problems of perception for citizens who see the Council carrying out major capital projects with grants from these funds, while day-to-day services are cut and Council Tax is increased. The city has benefited from successful bids to sources of funding available from the European Union on a competitive basis, in support of employment and skills, so the Government is being lobbied to establish alternative schemes when access to the European Social Fund (ESF) is no longer available. Potentially, the Council will be able to make bids to two remaining rounds for ESF funding, this year;
- (f) the new strategy for the development of the City Centre is out for public consultation and there has been a good response from local residents and businesses. The key themes are the green plan, public transport, parking, business growth and housing. A Growth Board is in place, which has members from the business community and local universities, and aims to develop strategic partnership working to achieve success for the city. The new Council Plan intends to create 15,000 new jobs, fill vacant shops and enhance the creative quarter. The Broadmarsh redevelopment will drive business growth as a substantial retail zone for the wider area, increasing local jobs and the revenue from business rates. It is hoped that local authorities will be able to retain more of the income from business rates in the future, if the allocation to central Government decreases;
- (g) the Council fully or partly owns a number of companies and, as part of the commercialisation process, is developing a group structure to achieve stronger overview and continuity. The various companies can have differing, complex structures of operation, so additional governance systems are being introduced to ensure that they are operated effectively and transparently. A Companies Governance Board has been established as a sub-committee of the Executive Board, and steps are being taken to bring all of the company chief executives together to develop partnership working. It is the Council's ambition to be the most commercial local authority in the country, and it is aiming to double its annual commercial income from £2million to £4million;
- (h) in terms of the Council-owned Robin Hood Energy, the company's senior management has been changed and a stabilisation process is underway, with regular management meetings taking place under the enhanced companies governance structure. The company has had some good success and work is underway to continue this in the future.

The Committee thanked Councillor Sam Webster for his report.

**RESOLVED to request that the figures for the total funding contribution to the Council's budget from central Government and from European Union sources is provided to the Committee.**

**40 DISCUSSION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR EARLY YEARS, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Councillor Neghat Khan, Portfolio Holder for Early Years, Education and Employment, gave a presentation on the current position in relation to her responsibilities for employment, her key priorities and activities for the current year, and a look ahead to the future. The following points were discussed:

- (a) there are 14 performance measures relating to employment within the new Council Plan, two of which are in the top 20 most important performance measures. Over the next four years, the target is to increase the number of Nottingham residents with level two qualifications from 69.9% to 73%, which will be within 3% of the national average. A major aim is to support 1,000 more Nottingham young people into university and to work with businesses to create 500 new apprenticeships, while seeking more local spending from the Apprenticeship Levy. Engagement is underway with schools, colleges and Futures to make children and young people aware of their opportunities and help them to be aspirational. A new college campus is planned in the city centre to offer a range of appropriate and inclusive courses to ensure that people have the right skills for the anticipated future jobs market in the area, and it will be important to develop a system to link people's skills with viable jobs;
- (b) it is intended that every young person in Nottingham will have the opportunity to take part in work experience over a much wider period of time across the school year, so an accessible Council work experience scheme will be created. Once this has been established, opportunities to expand the scheme into other partner companies owned by the Council will be explored;
- (c) plans are underway to offer work placement opportunities to at least 100 Nottingham university students across a range of Council departments, while there is also work with universities to create links with businesses across the city to provide further student placement opportunities, particularly in the creative industries. Currently, 30.4% of graduates from the Nottingham universities stay in the city once they have finished their courses and the aim is to increase this by a further 15%, while it is also important to encourage more people from Nottingham to attend its universities;
- (d) it is intended to protect funding for the Nottingham Jobs Hub, jobs fairs, the Nottingham Jobs Fund and the 100 apprenticeships at the Council from cuts, and to seek further sponsorship, to ensure that vital services remain in place to support local people into jobs. Work will be carried out to ensure that the three major city jobs fairs are relevant and accessible. A significant target is to continue to guarantee a job, training or further education place for all 18-24 year olds, in addition to helping 500 people who are over 50 into work or training. However, the number of people not in education, employment or training is rising, currently, and there have been some budget cuts to Futures – so there are likely to be pressures in meeting these delivery targets. As such, it is important to ensure that all colleges inform Futures of any students dropping out of courses, to ensure that they do not fall out of the system and its support mechanisms;

- (e) a one-stop jobs and training centre will be established at Loxley House with the Department for Work and Pensions and Housing Aid, alongside other Council services. Strong plans and targets for individual parts of the city will be supported through the Area-Based Grant Scheme. Many services are provided through community groups under the oversight of a designated lead organisation, which monitors the quality of delivery and reports back to the local Area Committee;
- (f) developers in the city are being encouraged to use local contractors and will contribute to skills and employment investment through the Section 106 agreements associated with planning permission. Further support is being offered to the retail and construction industries, including growing apprenticeship places, and employers are being encouraged to pay the living wage;
- (g) councillors can support the process of local employment by consulting with their constituents to establish the jobs and skills needs of their particular areas, setting out the best means for skills and employment services to engage with local people, and reviewing the quality and effectiveness of provision at their Area Committee meetings. It is vital to ensure that there is strong partnership working with providers and that the correct approach is taken in each particular area of the city, to make sure that the public money invested gives people the right work and life skills that they need to secure viable jobs;
- (h) careers discussion and advice is starting much earlier, with sessions now taking place at both primary and secondary schools. There is a greater sense of aspiration in schools and academies are competing to attract students and improve GCSE results. Currently, the Nottingham Schools Trust is investing a great deal in teachers and in developing school environments;
- (i) ultimately, much of the Council's development of skills and employment is dependent on working with partners and depending upon them to deliver quality and effective provision, in order to achieve success. As such, positive working relationships and effective monitoring is vital.

The Committee thanked Councillor Neghat Khan for her report.

**RESOLVED to recommend that a strong evaluation and feedback system is put in place for people on work experience placements at Nottingham City Council, to enable continual development and improvement, and to ensure that the placements are effective and useful.**

- **CHAIR**

During the next item, the Committee agreed to appoint Councillor Cate Woodward as Chair for the remainder of the meeting, as Councillor Carole McCulloch had to leave.

#### **41 COMBATting HATE CRIME IN NOTTINGHAM**

Councillor Rebecca Langton, Portfolio Holder for Communities; Zaimal Azad, Hate Crime Officer; Philip Broxholme, Performance and Intelligence Manager; and Superintendent Matt McFarlane from Nottinghamshire Police presented a report on

the number of Hate Crime incidents in the city and the work being done to tackle it. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the new Council Plan includes an ambitious target to develop a strategy with partners to address hate crime and reduce repeat victims of hate crime by 10%, which will be circulated for public consultation at the end of January. Hate crime is defined as “Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by hostility, prejudice or hate”, and it can be a complex area;
- (b) there is now much more reporting of cases, but cases are not necessarily a crime, and nor are they exclusively about hate, and are often part of a broader range of prejudice experienced in everyday life. At the national level, hate crime is recognised to relate to race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity. However, additional categories can be introduced at a local level and, in Nottingham, misogyny and alternative sub-culture are also recognised. When a case is reported to the Police, it is assessed to decide whether it represents a ‘hate incident’, or whether a criminal offence has been committed;
- (c) due to the number of vulnerable people affected by hate crime – particularly as repeated victims – there are a number of oversight and governance structures in place to address the issues, from high-level strategic planning to local delivery. The current National Action Plan represents a partnership approach with a focus on citizens working with the Police and other groups to understand, prevent, respond, increase reporting and improve support to victims in relation to hate crime;
- (d) locally, the Nottingham Hate Incidents Performance Panel is a multi-agency body that examines the cases relating to repeated victims of hate crime in detail, reviews service performance in these cases, develops learning and identifies any service gaps. The local City Voluntary Sector Hate Crime Network shares information and opportunities, and encourages partnership working in addressing hate crime at a community level;
- (e) the ‘Nottingham Together’ scheme is a preventative approach that aims to reinforce the fact that Nottingham citizens have ‘more in common’. The scheme seeks to celebrate difference, increase community solidarity and grow the power of bystander intervention. The ‘No Place for Hate’ scheme is a zero-tolerance enforcement approach targeting perpetrators of hate crime. Justice for victims can include criminal prosecution, civil interventions from the Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour team, mediation, victim support and an Exclusion Notice scheme;
- (f) a new system for recording reported crime was introduced during 2016, which represented a substantial change and improvement in recording for every type of crime. The volume of hate crime recorded has been increasing since 2016 but, due to the introduction of the new system, it is difficult to say whether this represents an actual increase in incidents, or whether it is due to increased reporting and better recognition;
- (g) 65% of reported hate crime relates to race, and 60% of hate crimes are public order offences. These are often either disputes between neighbours or unplanned

interactions in public spaces, where offensive terminology is used. A large proportion of incidents like this can take place on the tram network. 32% of cases relate to violence against the person (which includes harassment or threats of physical violence) and 6% constitutes arson and criminal damage – though most offences do not involve actual bodily harm to the victim;

- (h) reported repeat victimisation has increased since 2016 and it is a major aim to reduce it by 10%. However, repeat victimisation can be difficult to address because although the victim is the same, the perpetrators of each individual incident may be different. Statistically, the people most subject to repeated victimisation are aged between 30 to 49, where 43% of victims are male and 54% are female. 45% of victims are black, Asian or minority ethnic and 17% are white British (with the ethnicity of 38% not recorded). Offenders are most likely to be aged between 18 to 24 or 30 to 39, where 77% are male and 21% are female. 10% of offenders are black, Asian or minority ethnic and 26% are white British (with the ethnicity of 64% not recorded);
- (i) the Police's Hate Crime team consists of a Superintendent, Chief Inspector, Inspector and two Hate Crime Officers. From 2019, it started to operate under a revised policy and procedure with an improved risk assessment, improved follow-up with victims and closer working at an operational level with partners and other organisations. As a result, victim satisfaction with the response and support that they have received from the Police in relation to hate crimes has increased to 85.7%;
- (j) the Police are carrying out programmes with schools to empower children to combat any hate-related bullying in school that they witness. Currently, the Police are taking a 'reasonable' approach to incidents perpetrated by children to avoid them entering the criminal justice system, but governors must put policies in place to address all forms of bullying, with specific support structures for vulnerable children. A best practice guide has been produced to help put these policies in place. However, academy schools fall outside of local authority control and are individually responsible for what policies they put in place and how they enforce them, so it is not always possible to have a full picture of the situation within schools;
- (k) a 'Community Conversations' scheme is underway, with two years' funding from the European Social Fund, to encourage communities to discuss and confront prejudice and its root causes in a non-judgemental space. Hate crime incidents can be triggered by events that happen elsewhere in the world, and by how these events are treated by the media, which can reinforce or enhance existing prejudices. To address this, alternative media narratives are needed to celebrate the positive aspects of diversity, and these tend to be more effective at achieving change than direct counter-narratives. Domestically, the statistics do not suggest that the situation relating to the United Kingdom's departure from membership of the European Union has caused hate crime to increase within the city. Community Conversations are an important means of helping people to address prejudice at as many levels as possible. So far, community feedback on the scheme has been very positive;

- (l) a 'No Place for Hate' Charter has been established for the city centre and Hate Crime Champions are also in place for Police shifts, Council services and partner organisations. These Champions enable information and expertise to be shared, equip colleagues with skills and knowledge and increase collaboration across partner organisations;
- (m) the Committee observed that, as race is the oldest recognised hate crime, there is a risk that hate crime could be seen solely as a race issue, in the public consciousness. It noted that there was a reflection of this in the statistics, which identified 65% of reported hate crime as concerning race – while only 4% related to disability. It was concerned that the actual level of hate crime perpetrated against people with a disability, for example, may be greater than the reported numbers reflected in the statistics, and that this should be investigated.

The Committee thanked Councillor Rebecca Langton, Zaimal Azad, Philip Broxholme and Superintendent Matt McFarlane for their report.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) suggest that area-based grants are used to help Police Community Support Officers continue engagement on hate crime in primary schools and youth clubs, where possible and appropriate;**
- (2) recommend that young people, such as college students, are encouraged to be part of the Hate Crime Champions programme;**
- (3) recommended that educational work is carried out to emphasise that hate crime is perpetrated against victims due to a wide range of characteristics, and that further engagement is put in place to support victims in coming forward who suffer abuse due to recognised characteristics other than race.**

**42 WORK PROGRAMME**

Laura Wilson, Senior Governance Officer, presented the proposed work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.

**RESOLVED to include feedback from the Committee's working group on how citizens are consulted regarding Council policy change to the agenda for the meeting of 5 February 2020.**