

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

1. The report seeks to update Members on various issues relating to my portfolio.

Meetings with borough/district councils

2. As part of my ongoing dialogue with our borough and district council partners, I was pleased to hold meetings during the past month with the respective Leaders and Chief Executives of Ashfield District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Broxtowe Borough Council and Gedling Borough Council.

East Midlands Councils Executive Board

3. On 23rd September I travelled to the offices of Leicestershire County Council for a meeting of the East Midlands Councils Executive Board.
4. During the meeting we received reports from the East Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership Board, the East Midlands Regional Employers' Board and the East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership Board.
5. Executive Board members also received presentations from Mark Carroll of the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) on 'Local Government and the Growth Agenda' and a presentation from Paul Raynes of the Local Government Group on the 'Local Government Resource Review and Implications for the East Midlands'.
6. Item 11 on the agenda referred to the Midland Main Line (MML), which provided a timely opportunity to highlight the motion passed unanimously by Nottinghamshire County Council on 22nd September. This called on County MPs to lobby for an extra £32 million in capital investment to bring MML up to the standard of other Main Line services.

Visits to Children's Centres in Ashfield, Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood

7. During the last month I have taken the opportunity to visit Children's Centres in the Newark & Sherwood (27th September), Bassetlaw (11th October) and Ashfield (18th October) areas as part of my commitment to meet service users and employees at these centres in all areas of Nottinghamshire.

8. The centres are developed in line with the needs of the local community, so no two are exactly the same. Services can include health visitors, high quality childcare and early learning, advice on parenting and access to specialist services for families such as speech therapy, healthy eating advice or help with managing money.
9. My visits so far have reinforced what I already believed, that these facilities are a valuable resource to the people they serve and should be foremost on the list of critical provision we need to protect in these financially difficult times. I gave a commitment to centre users and employees that this Council administration would ensure the continuation of these services.

D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Board Meeting

10. On 28th September I attended the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Board Meeting at the Bombardier offices at Litchurch Lane in Derby.
11. Items under discussion included the prospects for manufacturing in the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, strategic transport policy, BD:UK (Broadband UK) Broadband funding and a review of the recent meeting with Greg Clark MP, Minister for Cities and Decentralisation.
12. The meeting also featured a presentation on tourism and the visitor economy by the Duke of Devonshire and an update from the LEP Chairman, Colin Walton on his latest contact meetings.

Nottinghamshire Outstanding Achievement 4Uth Award Presentation Evening

13. On 30th September it was my privilege to attend the first Outstanding Achievement 4Uth Award Presentation Evening, held in the Assembly Hall at County Hall.
14. Organised by Nottinghamshire County Council with valuable support from the Nottingham Post newspaper, the awards aim to celebrate the achievements of young people across the county. The purpose is to recognise those who are unsung heroes, have triumphed in the face of adversity or surpassed all expectation in a particular sport or activity.
15. The judging panel consisted of myself, Malcolm Pheby (Editor of the Nottingham Post), Katherine Royse (County Commissioner Nottingham Girl Guides), Joshua Sandhu (Member of the UK Youth Parliament), Councillor Philip Owen (Cabinet Member for Children & Young People's Services), Councillor Alan Rhodes (Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor June Stendall (Leader of the Independent Group).
16. The winner of the first Outstanding Achievement 4Uth Award was Laura Hickman (19), a teenager from Kirkby-in-Ashfield with Asperger's Syndrome and diabetes who has learned to manage her conditions and now champions other disabled young people. Laura is a special young person who has set an example to everyone by turning all of life's disadvantages into advantages. I was proud to present her with the first prize of £250 in vouchers of her choice, but on a heart-warming and humbling night it was obvious that the award itself was what meant most to Laura and her family and friends.

17. The County Council received a total of 57 nominations across Nottinghamshire. Laura Hickman was a joint nomination from two separate 'fans': her mum Tracey Hickman and County Council youth worker Andrea Spink, who has known Laura for just over two years.
18. Congratulations also go to the six other finalists who picked up their district winner awards: Toni Bingham (20) from New Ollerton (Newark & Sherwood); Ryan Pemberton (18) from Daybrook, Nottingham (Gedling); Becky Howie (17) from Ruddington (Rushcliffe); Jessie Carter Kay (21) from Bramcote (Broxtowe); Megan Parkin (15) from Worksop (Bassetlaw); Josh Renshaw (18) from Mansfield Woodhouse (Mansfield).
19. Given the success of the first awards, the plan is now to make this an annual event and discussions have already begun with officers to plan next year's awards.

Nottinghamshire Police Annual Awards

20. On 5th October I attended the Nottinghamshire Police Annual Awards at the Arrow Centre in Hucknall.
21. This is an occasion where the Chief Constable commends and acknowledges commitment, professionalism and the achievements of individuals and teams within the local Force. As Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council I was especially keen to emphasise the support of this authority for the police service after what has been a very challenging summer.
22. I was delighted that the Police Authority's Jean Varnam Community Award went to my own nomination, David Griffin. This accolade recognises members of the public whose contributions have helped to reduce crime and disorder. David is a neighbourhood watch co-ordinator from Radcliffe-on-Trent who brought together a range of agencies to help reduce antisocial behaviour in his area. He thoroughly deserves this recognition.
23. The Ged Walker Award, named in honour of the officer killed in the line of duty in Nottingham in 2003, was presented to PC Richie Howcroft, who bravely rescued three people from a house fire in Rainworth in 2008.
24. The Mansfield Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Team was acclaimed for its work with the town's Polish-speaking community.
25. There was also a lifetime achievement award for DI Stuart Kinton, of the force's Crime and Justice Department, who over the course of a distinguished career was involved in high-profile cases such as the abduction of baby Abbie Humphries in 1994 and the fatal shooting of 14-year-old Danielle Beccan a decade later. He has also raised almost £80,000 for cancer charities in memory of a former colleague.
27. Details of all the award winners can be found on the Nottinghamshire Police website.

Goose Fair Dinner

28. On 6th October, in keeping with previous years, I was pleased to attend the Goose Fair Dinner at the Council House in Nottingham.
29. I always welcome the opportunity to celebrate this world famous and historic fair, which this year ran for an extra day from Wednesday 5th October through to Sunday 9th October. The 717th staging of the event featured more than 500 attractions from the latest white knuckle rides to the more traditional rides much loved by young children.

New Writers UK Book Festival & Fayre 7th – 8th October

30. On 8th October I was delighted to attend the New Writers UK Book Festival & Fayre, held here at County Hall.
31. This was the second day of a two-day writers' event aimed at anyone interested in reading or writing books. Events at the festival included a creative writing workshop, advice on writing non-fiction, a storytelling masterclass from Pete Davis from the Storytellers of Nottingham and a talk on being a children's writer from Lucy Daniel Raby, whose screenwriting credits include *Angelina Ballerina*.
32. Visitors had the chance to speak to authors, receive advice on getting published and visit a range of book stalls. There was even a special creative writing workshop aimed at children aged 7-12. The whole event was free to attend and proved to be very enjoyable.

The Alan Ball Book Awards

33. I am delighted to report that Nottinghamshire County Council has won the Alan Ball Local History Award. The object of the award, administered by the Library Services Trust, is to encourage local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities.
34. The award was made to the Nottinghamshire County Council Libraries, Archives & Information Publications Group for the book, *These Uncertain Tymes, Newark and the Civilian Experience of the Civil Wars 1640- 1660*, by Dr Stuart Jennings.
35. On 12th October I attended the Nottinghamshire Archives office to take a tour and see the award presented by Mr Michael Saich, the Chairman of the Library Services Trust to Councillor Keith Walker, Chairman of the County Council. The author, Dr Jennings, said a few words and some of the archives he used in researching the book were put on display.
36. The ceremony also provided an opportunity to celebrate Nottinghamshire Archives being awarded 4 Stars in The National Archives self assessment of local authority archive services.

Safer Nottinghamshire Board

37. On 13th October I attended the latest meeting of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board at the Arrow Centre in Hucknall.

SkillForce Lunch

38. Also on 13th October I attended a lunch event in Nottingham to raise public awareness of the SkillForce charity. SkillForce engage hard-to-reach young people with an alternative curriculum around Community, Character and Contribution in order to inspire them to make a positive and permanent change in their lives.
39. Formed in 2000 and chosen by the Prime Minister, David Cameron as the backdrop to the launch of the National Citizen Service in April 2010, SkillForce have worked with and supported more than 44,000 young people nationally with 93% achieving at least one qualification and a significant 60% of those entitled to free school meals progressing onto further education compared to the national average of just 9%.
40. The Nottingham-based team is currently working with 6 cohorts and 77 young people in 5 schools. The majority of their work is in Key Stage 4, although they are now starting a primary/secondary transition programme.

South Nottinghamshire Academy Official Launch

41. On 21st October in my joint capacities as Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council and local councillor, I was delighted to attend the official launch of the South Nottinghamshire Academy in Radcliffe-on-Trent.
42. South Nottinghamshire Academy (formerly Dayncourt School) is a co-educational foundation academy for students aged 11 – 18 with Specialist Sports College status. The academy serves the communities of Cotgrave, Radcliffe on Trent and Shelford within the borough of Rushcliffe. There are currently around 750 students at South Nottinghamshire Academy plus 125 full and part-time staff.
43. Its mission is to 'Improve young people's lives' whether through academic, sporting or personal achievement. Students are expected to work hard and achieve the best they can. The academy offers a broad variety of academic and vocational courses including GCSE, A Level and BTEC. A range of amenities are available including superb sports installations, excellent dining hall and fully equipped classrooms with the latest IT and music and drama facilities. Amenities are also heavily used out of normal learning hours by students, local community groups and sports clubs, reflecting a belief in providing lifelong learning opportunities for everyone.
44. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Board of Governors of South Nottinghamshire College for supporting this new and exciting project. I also extend my gratitude to all the staff, county officers and former governors who have given their commitment to this initiative. I wish students the greatest success for the future under the wise guidance of the new Principal, Michael Dennison.

45. South Nottinghamshire Academy is a partner in Rushcliffe 6FC, an alliance with South Nottingham College and Rushcliffe School to deliver 6th form education in the borough.

COUNCILLOR MRS KAY CUTTS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL