

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 other local councils

2. As part of my ongoing dialogue with our local authority partners, I was pleased to hold a meeting on 8th December with the Mayor and Managing Director of Mansfield District Council.
3. On 12th December I met with the Leader and Chief Executive of Newark & Sherwood District Council and on 19th December I met the Leader and Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council.

Official opening of Greasley Beauvale Primary School

4. On 5th December it was my pleasure to attend the official opening of the brand new £6.175 million Greasley Beauvale Primary School in Newthorpe, designed in house by the Nottinghamshire County Council Design Team.
5. Since the amalgamation of the former DH Lawrence Infant School and Greasley Beauvale Junior School, we have been working towards building the new school to bring together under one roof all key stages and year groups.
6. Built on the site of the former CLASP junior school building, the new school also provides purpose-designed accommodation for pre-school children and before and after school facilities, delivered in partnership with the Pre-School Learning Alliance.
7. The Council has also been able to provide an excellent Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) through a partnership with Greasley Parish Council. This means that not only do children attending the school enjoy good facilities for sport but also that out of school hours the community can benefit too.
8. Many people, from a range of disciplines, have made a contribution to building the new school. Thanks go in particular to Corporate Property and the main contractor, Kier Marriott for their part in bringing the project to fruition.

9. The new school facility is superb, but as we have said on many occasions, it is the education that goes on within such buildings that matters most. Nottinghamshire County Council has provided an excellent learning facility which should help teachers and pupils to achieve high standards.

Carol Services

10. On 7th December I was present as Age Concern and Age UK presented an afternoon of seasonal music, carols and readings at Southwell Minister, featuring Bestwood Male Voice Choir and Nottingham Trent University Chamber Choir & Band.
11. Later the same day, I also fulfilled an invitation to attend the University of Nottingham Festival of Lessons & Carols at St. Mary's Church in the Lace Market, Nottingham.

Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB) Meeting

12. On 9th December I attended a meeting of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB) at the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Headquarters in Bestwood.

Visit to Nottingham Rugby

13. Also on 9th December I was pleased to visit the Meadow Lane Stadium in Nottingham to support Nottingham Rugby Football Club as they played their RFU Championship match against London Welsh RFC.
14. I am pleased to say it was a thoroughly entertaining (if somewhat cold) night with Nottingham RFC emerging victorious by 26-10. I wish Nottingham RFC every success for the future.

Nottinghamshire Children & Young People's Services Christmas Concert

15. It was, as ever, a pleasure to attend the Nottinghamshire Children & Young People's Services Christmas Concert, held at the Royal Concert Hall on 13th December.
16. Entitled '*A Christmas Wish*', the concert captured all the magical moments of Christmas: the surprises, special presents and kind and thoughtful feelings for others.
17. The young people on the stage represented some of Nottinghamshire's finest young performers, who demonstrated their talents in music, drama and singing to an audience of hundreds of children from Nottinghamshire schools, together with families, friends and teachers.
18. Over the preceding weeks, hundreds of Christmas wishes had been sent in by children and adults to be tied onto 'Christmas Wish Trees' in the Concert Hall foyer. I hope that at least some of those wishes have already come true!

19. I am sure I speak for all Council Members in placing on record our thanks to our staff who support and encourage Nottinghamshire's young people throughout the year 2011. It is on nights like these that everyone can see the value of such work.

D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

20. On 14th December I attended a D2N2 LEP Emergency Board meeting at the offices of The Hardstaff Group in Kingston-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire. The meeting was chaired by Trevor Fletcher, Managing Director of The Hardstaff Group, in the absence of LEP Board Chairman, Colin Walton.
21. Board members discussed progress on implementing the Nottinghamshire Enterprise Zone and its approach to managing the £17.46m Growing Places funding allocated to the partnership by Government.
22. Delivering the benefits of the Nottinghamshire Enterprise Zone is a priority for D2N2. The Zone is a crucial part of the Board's plans for economic growth, and if successful, will provide income for D2N2 to recycle into investments and projects to further boost the local economy.
23. D2N2 will not allocate any of its Growing Places funding until it has fully considered the extent of investment needed to bring the Nottinghamshire Enterprise Zone to market. We have commissioned a board-led team, drawing on independent technical advice, to open discussions with Alliance Boots, the land owners for most of the Zone.
24. The Board have also asked for more information about other potential opportunities to use Growing Places funding to bring forward strategically important sites that realise economic benefits. D2N2 will make decisions on allocating the fund in the New Year.

East Midlands Councils Executive Board

25. On 16th December I attended an East Midlands Councils Executive Board meeting, hosted by Leicestershire County Council.
26. The agenda for the meeting included reports from the East Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership Board, the Regional Employers' Board and the Strategic Migration Partnership Board.
27. Items discussed included the latest policy developments on planning, housing and transportation issues as they affect local authorities in the East Midlands. This included a continuing focus on the case for upgrading and electrifying the Midland Main Line (MML) which was the subject of a motion unanimously agreed by Nottinghamshire County Council in September 2011.

Nottingham Post Business Awards

28. After the Christmas and New Year break, on 6th January 2012 I attended the official launch of the 2012 Nottingham Post Business Awards, where Nottinghamshire County Council is proud to be sponsoring, once again, the Nottingham Post Company of the Year Award. The award highlights the success of local businesses with an annual turnover of more than £2 million. Last year's winner was Synseal Ltd based in Huthwaite. Other award categories include Small Business of the Year, Business Innovation, Contribution to the Community and International Trade.
29. I was joined at the launch event at the Nottingham Post Offices by the Deputy Cabinet Member for Culture & Community (and 'Business Engagement Champion') Councillor Keith Girling and officers from our Communications and Economic Development teams.
30. The winners of the 2012 awards will be announced at an event to be held at the Council House in Nottingham on 4th July 2012.

Official Re-opening of Mansfield Library

31. On 10th January I was absolutely delighted to attend the official re-opening by the Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council of the extensively refurbished Mansfield Central Library.
32. The library re-opened its doors on 3rd January and prior to the official opening event had hosted a weekend of family fun. A programme of forthcoming events at the library is available on the Nottinghamshire County Council website.
33. After consulting library users, improvements to the facility include lots of new books, more computers, an exciting new children's library with space for all age groups, a larger local history area and dedicated spaces for studying, researching and relaxing.
34. There has been a focus in particular on making the new-look library more attractive to young people, with refreshment facilities and a flexible space in which to hold more special events.
35. Another lift has been provided to help service users access the main library, together with improved toilet facilities and more efficient heating and ventilation to make the environment generally more comfortable.
36. The ceremony took place on the mezzanine floor, from where we could see just how attractive and enticing the new library should be for people living in the Mansfield area.

COUNCILLOR MRS KAY CUTTS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL