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Marjorie Toward,
Councillor Ben Bradley MP,
Councillor Matt Barney,
Councillor Boyd Elliott,
Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle
Nottinghamshire County Council
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Loughborough Road
NG2 7QP



Delivered via Email

13th March 2023

Intention to Call-In Cabinet Decision – Healthy Families Programme

Dear Marje and Cllrs Bradley, Barney, Elliott and Gilfoyle,

I am writing to inform you as the relevant Proper Officer, Leader, Cabinet Member and Overview and Scrutiny Chairs, that it is the intention of the signatories of this letter to initiate the Council's pre-call-in procedure for a Decision taken at Cabinet on Thursday 9th March, regarding 'Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme: 2024 and beyond'.

The purpose of this letter is therefore both to begin the pre-call-in procedure, as per page 108 the Constitution, to outline our areas of concern, and to indicate our intention to proceed with a Call-In, should the outcome of this pre-call-in procedure leave these concerns unresolved.

As outlined in the Constitution, we seek to call-in this decision under the following principles:

- a. Compliance with the law;
- f. where required by law or this Constitution, describing options considered and giving reasons for the decision; and
- g. in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Under the heading 'Other options considered', paragraph 33 refers to a 'comprehensive options appraisal'. The Members contacted as part of the 'informal dialogue', referring to a meeting that I have expressed concerns about further at a later point in this letter, were not presented with a comprehensive options appraisal. This meant that they were not well enough informed to be supportive of this report as is suggested.

Additionally, some Members were categorically unsupportive of the decision within this report, for reasons I have also outlined below.

This report contains a misrepresentation of their views.

Paragraph 49 of the report refers to 'informal dialogue'. This reference specifically pertains to a meeting which took place on 16 February 2023. This private meeting, taking place online and in person, was described in the meeting request as 'Pre Decision Scrutiny – Recommissioning the Notts Healthy Families Programme'. I believe this fact has been intentionally omitted from this report, due to the implications such a meeting would have.

I refer back to paragraph 9 of the Council's constitution, which states:

'[...] The Council (mainly through the scrutiny process and call-in of decisions) is ultimately responsible for holding the Cabinet to account.'

As outlined in a similar letter sent to you earlier today relating to similar meetings acknowledged within another Cabinet report, we understand these meetings to be unconstitutional, to have been undertaken improperly, to conflict with the Council's existing scrutiny process, and possibly to be in contravention of the 1972 Local Government Act.

On safeguarding, paragraph 51 for the report states:

"The Nottinghamshire HFP play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of unborn babies, children, and young people. These responsibilities are clearly defined in the current service specification."

During previous public Council meetings, as well as the aforementioned 'Pre Decision Scrutiny – Recommissioning the Notts Healthy Families Programme' meeting, Labour Members have raised serious safeguarding concerns regarding the re-commissioning of the Health Visitor service in its current delivery format.

Members are concerned that it is currently possible for the service to be delivered in its current format with significant periods, possibly the entirety of the service, to be delivered with no physical, in-person contact having been made between the recipients and the service providers, especially with families who have required the service during the Covid-19 lockdown periods.

This Decision does not take any of these concerns into consideration.

Due to the Council's statutory responsibilities as a Corporate Parent, these concerns must be addressed directly before any further commitments to recommissioning the service, including in 'principle' are made.

Furthermore, this report does not take into consideration any Environmental Implications.

I refer to the Council's Corporate Environmental Policy which states that the County Council will:

"Embed environmental considerations into its policies, plans, procurement and use of financial resources as well as an assessment of the implications for sustainability and the environment in all relevant reports to committees, which it is also required to do through the Council's Environmental Policy."

I wait in expectation that the issues raised above will be acknowledged in your response, and in lieu of a timely response, instruct the relevant Officers that the signatories to this letter request to proceed with the Call-In of this Decision.

Sincerely,



**County Councillor Kate Foale
Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council Labour Group
& Call-In Lead Member**

Additional Call-In Signatories



**Councillor Mike Pringle
Labour Group Deputy Leader**



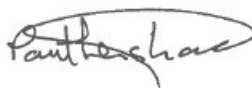
**Councillor Michelle Welsh
Labour Spokesperson for
Children & Families**



**Councillor Errol Henry
Labour Group Business Manager**



**Councillor Anne Callaghan
Labour Spokesperson**



**Councillor Paul Henshaw
Labour Group Spokesperson**



**Councillor Penny Gowland
Labour Group Spokesperson**