

## **APPENDIX A**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016 QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

#### **Question to the Chairman of the Transport and Highways Committee, from Councillor John Wilmott**

Will the Chairman of Transport and Highways assure this council that with the pothole problem still at a very high level and that this newly formed company Via are intent on doing private work with the same amount of staff that is at present employed by this council. Will the Chairman of Transport and Highways agree with me it is absolutely essential that our own work is done first and taking on new private work should have a secondary importance?

#### **Response from Councillor Kevin Greaves, Chairman of the Transport and Highways Committee**

The creation of Via East Midlands Limited to deliver Highways and Fleet Services to Nottinghamshire County Council and the residents is a significant achievement. It is first in the field of such service provision.

In addition to maintaining the service provision as prescribed in the contract, which is fundamental to Via, the company does have the opportunity to trade with external partners of up to a value of 20% of its annual turnover.

I am optimistic that in time Via will increase the level of work it carries out for external customers and I am also optimistic that in time it may have the opportunity to grow the company and workforce.

At the recent Member briefing at which the Managing Director of Via, Doug Coutts was present he made the commitment that the service to Nottinghamshire is paramount to Via and I have no doubt that is a commitment which will be honoured.

#### **Question to the Chairman of the Children & Young People's Committee, from Councillor Bruce Laughton**

Is the Committee Chairman aware that Southwell Youth Club, based at 'The Core' Young People's Centre, is having to turn youngsters away because the volunteer organiser has a huge workload and can only run sessions twice a month?

The organiser is actively trying to recruit more volunteers, with an ultimate aim to offer weekly sessions. However, the "increase in practical support for the voluntary youth and play sector to develop and maintain provision" which was promised in this Council's budget in 2014/15\*, has yet to materialise.

Will the Committee Chairman intervene to ensure that this dedicated youth worker receives the level of support and encouragement he deserves, and that this already successful youth club can expand its provision to meet demand?

\*Budget Business Case B11

**Response from Councillor John Peck, Chairman of the Children & Young People's Committee**

The Youth Service's Voluntary Youth Sector Technical Specialist Team was increased from one full time equivalent to two full time equivalent in 2014 to support the development and continuation of voluntary youth clubs and play schemes across the county.

Team staff have provided in-depth support to volunteers at Southwell Youth Club since its inception, and continue to be available to offer support as and when requested.

I am not aware that there has been any recent requests, but I am certainly very happy, to ensure that Southwell Youth Club gets whatever support they require.

As Councillor Laughton is no doubt aware, our Youth Service also continues to work in partnership with the wider Nottinghamshire Voluntary Youth Partnership to ensure that those groups across the County who require support receive it on an appropriate basis. As I have said I am very happy for Southwell to continue to receive whatever support they need to help them.

**Question to the Chairman of Policy Committee, from Councillor John Wilmott**

After the vote on the referendum, that the people of Nottinghamshire decided overwhelmingly to leave the European Union, while most political parties were for staying in. Will this council be taking more notice of the will of the people, especially on the toilet petitions and campaigns or are they going to continue to ignore the will of the people?

**Response from Councillor Alan Rhodes, Chairman of Policy Committee**

Like Councillor Wilmott, I agree that listening to people is important, but I disagree with his assertion that this council has been ignoring the will of the people.

Each of us as Councillors spends an awful lot of time listening to the views of people we represent and dealing with constituency matters. After all that is what we were elected to do. Indeed, here at the County Council we can bring petitions and talk on constituency matters both of which have happened this morning, these are ways, along with many other ways, of listening to people and responding to them.

Chairman, this administration has a good record of listening to people. We listened to people who have told us that they are struggling day to day and introduced the Living Wage for our lowest paid workers, two and a half thousand of them and to act as a role model for other businesses and organisations in Nottinghamshire to benefit all our communities.

We have listened to elderly people who told us they wished to stay independent for as long as possible. We have therefore invested in supporting them to do this, including by building extra care housing and introducing services to allow people to stay independent in their own homes.

We have listened to our people when they raised concerns about safety outside schools by creating 20mph zones and investing in a camera car. We have listened to our people when they told us that they wanted the streetlights put back on at night. And I could go on to show many other examples of the way this Council has listened to the will of the people.

Every year we have consulted on our budget proposals, listening to, and acting on, what people have told us.

This council takes seriously its responsibility to listen: that is why at June's Policy Committee we passed a report which will increase our capacity to gather people's views. We agreed to an expanded public engagement campaign which includes growing our Citizen's Panel and boosting our Annual Residents' Survey. In these ways we are encouraging as many people as possible to have their say in local decision making.

Councillor Willmott asks that this Council takes more notice of the will of the people in relation to the toilet petitions he has been working on for Hucknall. As he has been told many times already, by myself, by other members of the Council and officers of this Council, the issue of public toilets in Hucknall and elsewhere in the County, is a matter for the District Council not Nottinghamshire County Council. We are not providers of public conveniences.

Whilst on the subject of public toilet provision, I have to say Chairman, it takes a special kind of crazy creativity to link the EU referendum with the toilet provision in Hucknall. May I once again remind Councillor Willmott that as Deputy Leader of Ashfield District Council, not just a member of the Council but a Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder responsible, Councillor Willmott voted in 2014 to close every public convenience in the District of Ashfield including those in his home town of Hucknall. He was clearly not putting Hucknall first, in fact he is guilty on not just one occasion of putting Hucknall last, nor was he listening to the people he's elected to represent.