

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 30th June 2011

agenda item number **7a i.**

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Radcliffe-on-Trent Skate Park

1. On 31st May, I was delighted to attend the launch of the newly revamped Radcliffe-on-Trent Skate Park. Youngsters in the local area now have an excellent, modern recreational facility thanks to investment of £1,500 from Nottinghamshire County Council.
2. To my knowledge this was the first time I have been pictured in the local press wearing a baseball cap and riding a BMX bike(!) but I was very pleased to promote and celebrate an example of the commitment this local authority is making to young people across the county.

Westfield Folkhouse

3. Continuing the above theme, on 3rd June I was pleased to attend the opening by the Chairman of the Council of the new £6.5 million state-of-the-art 'Westfield Folkhouse' Young People's Centre on Westfield Lane in Mansfield.
4. Nottinghamshire County Council contributed £1.5m towards the project, with the remaining money coming from the Government's 'Myplace' fund. This fantastic facility will offer youth clubs and projects seven days a week.
5. The building has multi-media gaming zones, music and dance areas, a DJ booth, a cafe and offices. It will house activities for disabled young people and vocational training programmes for teenagers. Outside, there are sensory gardens, allotments, walls for graffiti art and five-a-side football, volley ball and chess areas. The main building is a restored 1830s grade II listed building.

D2N2 Board Meeting

6. On 8th June I joined our Chief Executive, Mick Burrows at Nottingham City Council's Loxley House offices for a meeting of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Board. Board members were updated on progress to date on the Alliance Boots Enterprise Zone and information on the proposed programme bids for Round 2 of the Regional Growth Fund (RGF).
7. Members also received a report on the economic outlook for the D2N2 area, based on the Bank of England's Agent's summary of business conditions, the CBI Economic Situation report provided for its Regional Council, the Institute of Directors, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce's Quarterly Economic Survey and information given by the Federation of Small Businesses and individual businesses. It was acknowledged that many businesses are experiencing a "bumpy ride" which is not encouraging business investment, though confidence is much higher in the manufacturing sector where employment and orders are up. Export sales are at their highest since March 2008.
8. A further report on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund confirmed that all the transport authorities within D2N2 had submitted bids to the fund. Emphasis was placed on the need to maximise the overall investment secured for the area through collaboration and a partnership approach.

Local Government and Health Transitions Briefing

9. On 13th June I joined colleagues in the Rufford Suite for a presentation on the Health & Social Care Bill, Public Health White Paper & Local Democratic Legitimacy introduced by David Pearson, our Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director for Adult Social Care, Health & Public Protection.
10. There can be no doubting the complexity of the health reform agenda, with local government taking back responsibility for health improvement and a local public health service. This event offered members an opportunity to hear interpretation and analysis of the reforms from Chris Kenny, Director of Public Health for NHS Nottinghamshire County and Dr Doug Black, Medical Director for NHS Nottinghamshire County and Associate Medical Director for NHS East Midlands.
11. Mr Kenny's presentation included an assessment of the potential local impact of the Health & Wellbeing Board established last month, while Dr Black called upon his 24 years' of experience as a GP in Nottingham to give a broadly optimistic assessment of the Government proposals. He suggested that these were coherent and argued that

change was essential, but he also highlighted the financial risks and the importance of meeting the developmental needs of GP Consortia.

12. It was noted that even as Mr Kenny and Dr Black were speaking at County Hall, Professor Steve Field was announcing the NHS Futures Forum's recommendations for changes to the Health and Social Care Bill at a King's Fund press conference. The Forum's core recommendations have since been largely accepted by the Coalition Government and the Bill is being sent back to the committee stage in the House of Commons.

16th Air Assault Brigade

13. On 14th June I was delighted to fulfil an invitation from Brigadier Andrew Williams OBE, Commander of the 49 (East) Brigade, to attend a reception and presentation by the 16 Air Assault Brigade at Welbeck, the Defence Sixth Form College in Loughborough.
14. The event provided guests with an opportunity to learn more about the British Army contribution to operations in Afghanistan. A presentation was delivered by Brigadier James Chiswell, Commander of the 16 Air Assault Brigade, who had recently returned from a deployment to Helmand province.
15. Nottinghamshire County Council is proud to boast several forces reservists amongst its employees, so it was interesting to receive an insight into the role they play once mobilised and the advanced transferable skills they carry between their civilian and military work.

Visit to Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

16. On 16th June I joined the Deputy Leader and Chairman of the Health & Wellbeing Board, Councillor Martin Suthers on a visit to the Duncan Macmillan House headquarters of the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.
17. After a short meeting with the Chairman of the Trust, Dean Fathers, we were greeted by the Head of Involvement, Paul Sanguinazzi, who introduced us to some of the service users who volunteer in the Trust's Involvement Centre. This provided an important opportunity for constructive discussion about service provision and challenges posed by the difficult economic climate.
18. The final part of our visit involved a tour of the Wells Road Centre on the same site, which is a low secure unit for men with mental health issues. A recreational facility including a five-a-side football pitch is being constructed outside the building for service users.

Fly a Flag for Our Armed Forces

19. On 20th June I was pleased to join the Chairman of the County Council for the 'Fly a Flag for Our Armed Forces' event outside the Civic Suite at County Hall.
20. Presided over by ever-reliable Master of Ceremonies Mr Colin Slater MBE, the event commenced with a March Past followed by the raising of the Union flag by HM Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Sir Andrew Buchanan, Bt KCVO.
21. A prayer for peace and protection was then led by The Venerable Air Vice Marshal Robin Turner CB DL RAF (Ret'd). After this the Chairman, Councillor Keith Walker (whose son used to serve with the Household Cavalry) offered his own words of thanks to all guests for attending. Visitors included a contingent of Japanese schoolchildren from Komaki Elementary School in Nagano, Japan, who were present as part of an exchange arrangement with Cropwell Bishop School.
22. The flag of St George and the Union flag fly permanently alongside the Nottinghamshire County Council flag outside County Hall as a lasting symbol of pride in our heritage and our armed forces.

Meetings with borough/district councils

23. Since my previous report to Council and continuing my dialogue with our borough and district council partners, I have held meetings with the respective Leaders and Chief Executives of Newark & Sherwood District Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council, and with the Mayor and Managing Director of Mansfield District Council.

COUNCILLOR MRS KAY CUTTS

Leader of the Council