

Minutes



Meeting COUNTY COUNCIL (ANNUAL MEETING)

Date Thursday, 20th July 2006 (10.30 am – 12.45 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

Councillors

Peter Barnes (Chairman)

John C Allin (Vice-Chairman)

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | Reg Adair | | Bruce Laughton |
| | Dick Anthony | | E D W Llewellyn-Jones |
| A | Chris Baron | | Ellie Lodziak |
| | Joyce Bosnjak | | Joe Lonergan MBE |
| | M M Brandon-Bravo OBE | A | Jim Napier |
| | Kenneth Bullivant | | James O'Riordan |
| | Richard Butler | | Philip Owen |
| A | Steve Carr | | Tom Pettengell |
| | Steve Carroll | | Mrs Sheila Place |
| | John Carter | | Peter D Prebble |
| | John Clarke | | D E Pulk |
| | Jennifer Cole | | Alan Rhodes |
| | Barrie Cooper | | Ken Rigby |
| A | John Cottee | | Susan Saddington |
| | M J Cox | | David Shaw |
| | S M Creamer | | Nellie Smedley |
| | Mrs K L Cutts | | Mrs S M Smedley |
| | Yvonne Davidson | | Mark Spencer |
| | Alan Davison | | A S Stewart |
| | V H Dobson | | J R Stocks |
| | Sybil Fielding | | M Storey |
| | Andy Freeman | A | Martin Suthers OBE |
| | Glynn Gilfoyle | A | Linda Sykes |
| | Keith Girling | | The Hon Joan Taylor |
| | Albert Haynes | | David Taylor |
| | John M Hemsall | | Parry Tsimbiridis |
| | Nigel Henshaw | | Kevan Wakefield |
| A | Stan Heptinstall MBE | | Keith Walker |
| | Richard Jackson | | C P Winterton |
| | Rod Kempster | | Brian Wombwell |
| | David Kirkham | | Yvonne Woodhead |
| | John R Knight | | 1 Vacancy |
| | Patrick Lally | | |

OPENING PRAYER

Upon the Council commencing at 10.30 am Councillor Peter Barnes called upon Members and Officers to observe a minute's silence in memory of the late Councillor George Kane.

Following the observation of a minute's silence the Chairman's Chaplain led prayers.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: 2006/061

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the County Council held on 29th June 2006 be agreed as a correct record and confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Chris Baron

Councillor Steve Carr

Councillor John Cottee

Councillor Stan Heptinstall MBE

Councillor Jim Napier

Councillor Martin Suthers OBE

Councillor Linda Sykes

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Kevan Wakefield declared a person interest in agenda item 12 – due to a member of his family being involved in the transport industry.

CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- (A) The Chairman informed Members that an envelope will be circulated at the meeting for Members to make a donation, if they so wish, to the hospice where Councillor George Kane spent his last weeks.
- (B) Councillor Gilfoyle made the following statement regarding water usage in Nottinghamshire. "As of 10.25 am this morning the Emergency Planning Team has been in touch with colleagues from Severn Trent Water. At this time there has been no request of support to Nottinghamshire County Council from the water company. Severn Trent Water confirmed that demand is exceeding supply in the absence of a hosepipe ban. There had been no calls to emergency services regarding water problems. Severn Trent Water have multiple incidents across the region and have deployed 46 tankers and bowsers. Severn Trent Water are producing an additional 200 million litres of treated water each day which is sufficient for 80,000 people in the region. Severn Trent Water are also confident that they are

helping those people that are affected and they will contact the County Council and other agencies should they need support.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

Councillor Richard Butler presented to the Chairman a petition regarding a pedestrian crossing in Cotgrave.

(A) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 6.1

Six questions had been received as follows:-

- (1) Excessive bureaucracy in the Health Service (Councillor Barrie Cooper)
- (2) Programme of works on Pavements and bus stops in Newark and Sherwood District(Councillor Keith Girling)
- (3) Criminal Records Bureau and school buses (Councillor Keith Girling)
- (4) Handing over management of Seven Country Parks (Councillor Richard Butler)
- (5) National Register of Gifted and Talented Education (councillor Martin Brandon-Bravo)
- (6) Closure of Gravelly Hollow, Calverton Village (Councillor Mark Spencer)

The full text of the questions, together with the answers given, are included at Appendix A to these Minutes.

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 6.2

There was one question received under Standing Order 6.2, regarding the recent announcement made by the Home Secretary to withdraw the order to amalgamate Nottinghamshire with surrounding police forces, from Councillor M. J. Cox

The full text of the questions asked under Standing Orders 6.1 and 6.2 together with the answers given are included at Appendix A to these Minutes.

TOBACCO CONTROL POLICY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

In introducing the report, Councillor Stocks highlighted the need for Nottinghamshire County Council to review its smoking policy because of the national situation and also the financial penalties which have been awarded due to secondary smoking. He also informed Members that it was a cross department working party that developed the policy alongside the Trade Unions. He also informed Members that there would be guidance being produced for all staff regarding the implications of the policy.

On a motion by Councillor John Stocks, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Woodhead, it was

RESOLVED: 2006/062

- (1) That the revised Tobacco Control Policy and Guidance be approved and
- (2) that the implementation date of the policy be 30th October 2006.

In accordance with Standing Order 11.2 of the Council Procedure Rules, Councillors Martin Brandon-Bravo OBE and T. A. J. Pettengell asked that their vote against the motion be recorded and Councillor Mrs. K. L. Cutts asked for her abstention to be recorded.

DELIVERY AND IMPROVEMENT STATEMENT

On a motion by Councillor J. E. Anthony, seconded by Councillor Allen Rhodes, it was:-

RESOLVED: 2006/063

That the publication of the Delivery and Improvement Statement for Adult Social Care be noted.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The report was presented to update Members on the position regarding the Development of Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and the methods of working.

On a motion by Councillor Llewellyn-Jones, seconded by Councillor the Hon Joan Taylor, it was:-

RESOLVED: 2006/064

That the Scrutiny Work Programme as set out in the report be noted.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Members were reminded that an amended appendix to the report was circulated prior to the meeting.

On a motion by Councillor D. J. Kirkham, seconded by Councillor M. Storey, it was:-

RESOLVED: 2006/065

That the amendments to the Constitution as set out in the amended appendix A circulated be approved with immediate effect and delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any further changes as may, in her opinion, be properly and reasonably required to give affect to the New Strategic Director posts necessary to ensure the lawful of the operation of the County Council's business and the proper maintenance of the Constitution.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW WAYS OF WORKING IN COUNCIL MEETINGS

In introducing the report, Councillor Storey informed Members that the amendments to the 'Ways of Working in Council' is to enable engagement of all Members of the County Council.

On a motion by Councillor M. Storey, seconded by Councillor M. Brandon-Bravo, it was:-

RESOLVED: 2006/066

- (1) That the proposal set out in the report be approved for suspending Standing Orders at Council meeting for a limited period of time to enable the New Ways of Working, as outlined in paragraphs 2.4 to 2.7 of the report to be put into effect.
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer and Head of Members' Services include the provision of such arrangements in the procedural note for the next Council meeting.
- (3) That a further report is presented to the County Council in December 2006 or January 2007 at which time Council will consider whether there is merit in making changes to Council Standing Orders as a consequence of the trial period as described in the report.

DENOMINATIONAL HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak introduced her report which set out the proposed arrangements for the provision of Denominational Home to School Transport and the scope and responses to the countywide consultation.

There followed a wide ranging debate, during which Members contributed information and views in relation to the proposed introduction of charges for home to school transport for denominational schools and related issues. Members in particular spoke about the impact on families and transport issues arising from the proposals. The motion was then put to the meeting and following a show of hands, was declared to be carried.

In accordance with Standing Orders, ten Members requested a division. The bell was sounded and the roll was called by the Chief Executive, who recorded the vote cast by each Member who was present. A record of votes cast is as follows:

Members voting '**For**' (35)

Councillors

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| John Allin | Pat Lally |
| Dick Anthony | E. D. W. Llewellyn-Jones |
| Peter Barnes | Ellie Lodziak |
| Joyce Bosnjak | James O'Riordan |
| Steve Carroll | Sheila Place |
| John Carter | Darrel Pulk |
| John Clarke | Alan Rhodes |
| Jen Cole | David Shaw |
| Jim Creamer | Nellie Smedley |
| Yvonne Davidson | Mrs. Stella Smedley |
| Alan Davison | John Stocks |
| Sybil Fielding | Michael Storey |
| Andy Freeman | The Hon Joan Taylor |
| Glynn Gilfoyle | Parry Tsimbiridis |
| Albert Haynes | Kevan Wakefield |
| Nigel Henshaw | Chris Winterton |
| David Kirkham | Yvonne Woodhead |
| John Knight | |

Members voting '**Against**' (24)

Councillors

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Reg Adair | Bruce Laughton |
| Martin Brandon-Bravo OBE | Joe Lonergan MBE |
| Kenneth Bullivant | Phillip Owen |
| Richard Butler | T. A. J. Pettengell |
| Barry Cooper | Peter D. Prebble |
| M. J. Cox | Ken Rigby |
| Mrs. K. Cutts | Sue Saddington |
| V. H. Dobson | Mark Spencer |
| Keith Girling | Andy Stewart |
| John Hemsall | David Taylor |
| Richard Jackson | Keith Walker |
| R. Kempster | Brian Wombwell |

RESOLVED: 2006/067

- (1) That a reasonable charge for transport to denominational schools be introduced with effect from the school year 2007/08 and that specified groups are exempted as detailed in paragraph 38 of the report and shown again in appendix 4 attached to the report
- (2) that the level of charges for the school year 2007/08 as shown in option 5 (appendix 5 attached to the report) be adopted, and that thereafter this decision be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and
- (3) that the addendum (appendix 4 attached to the report) to replace/amend paragraphs 2.2, 3.2 and 4.4 in the Nottinghamshire County Council's Statement of Home to School Transport Policy be adopted.

ADJOURNMENT MOTION

There were no motions to adjourn the Council.

CHAIRMAN

M_20July06

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – THURSDAY, 20TH JULY 2006

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 6.1

Question from Councillor Barrie Cooper for Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health

Dr. Chris Clark, a long-serving GP in my area, recently resigned in protest at the excessive bureaucracy associated with the target-driven National Health Service.

He is quoted in the Evening Post as saying that the NHS is now “light years from the concept of care”.

Would the Cabinet Member for Adult Services & Health agree that, via the Joint City/County Health Scrutiny Committee, we should urge the appropriate health authorities to review systems which have caused experienced, dedicated professionals to walk away in frustration and despair?

Response by Councillor Dick Anthony, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health and Councillor Edward Llewellyn-Jones, Chairman of Scrutiny

Councillor Dick Anthony

“I would like to thank Councillor Barrie Cooper for his question.

As this question relates to the Scrutiny Chairman I am going to pass the question over to him, Councillor Edward Llewellyn-Jones, to reply.”

Councillor Edward Llewellyn-Jones

“May I thank Councillor Cooper for his question and Councillor Anthony for asking me to respond in greater detail.

It is always sad when a professional like a GP chooses to retire early and I wish Dr Clark well in his retirement - his practice will be missed in the Lady Bay area of West Bridgford.

I would like to make it clear that the issue surrounding the resignation of Dr Clark is not really a matter for the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. This particular Committee’s remit deals exclusively with health matters occurring within Nottingham City’s PCT boundaries which then affect residents in the County.

As Dr Clark's resignation is a personal matter based on his perception of what amounts to care within the National Health Service and the impact his decision has on patients within the Lady Bay area of Rushcliffe, it would be inappropriate for the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to get involved.

Furthermore, Dr Clark has been a member of the Professional Executive Committee of Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust, which is committed to delivering and improving support to small practices, and now he is leaving to go to live in France taking with him his knowledge and expertise. I find that really quite sad.

Neither is it a significant change being sought by Rushcliffe PCT and, therefore, not a matter which the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee should investigate.

As to the bureaucracy and targets described, we have all seen the reports of the large incomes some GPs are now earning with their new contract, so we have to set all that against a measure that establishes we are getting value for money from the NHS.

So, if there should be an issue relating to service delivery for the former patients of Dr Clark then it is for the local PPI Forum to take this up with Rushcliffe PCT. It might even be appropriate for Rushcliffe Borough Council's Health Scrutiny Committee to investigate the problem and seek a resolution.

I hope Councillor Cooper appreciates that neither Nottinghamshire County Council nor the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, which I Chair, is able to investigate the issues surrounding Dr Clark's resignation and the problems he has caused in doing so.

Thank you."

Question from Councillor Keith Girling to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Concerns have been expressed by the Newark and Sherwood Local Strategic Partnership that although bus operators are now providing more vehicles with easy access facilities for disabled passengers, the accompanying programme of works to raise pavements and improve bus stops seems to have lost impetus.

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment inform Council as to when she expects these works to be completed in the Newark & Sherwood area?

Response by Councillor Stella Smedley, Cabinet Member for Environment:

"Can I thank Councillor Girling for his question.

The County Council has an extensive investment programme to make improvements at all 4,800 bus stops in the County.

This programme includes the installation of new poles, flags and timetable cases so that all operators can display roadside timetable information at all stops on their routes. It is programmed to complete this work for all stops in Newark by the 1st April 2007.

With respect to the installation of raised kerbs at bus stops, this work started in 2001, and since then well over 35% of stops have had raised kerbs installed at a cost approaching £430,000. This programme has concentrated on completing major urban areas and all our Bus Quality Partnership Routes. I am happy to confirm that all stops in Newark (and there are 155) will have raised kerbs by the 1st April 2007.

The work of installing raised kerbs will continue throughout the County as our Highways Department will, as part of road/footway improvements, continue to install raised kerbs at all stops. This programme of investment is due for completion at the end of LTP2 in 2011.”

Question from Councillor Keith Girling to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People’s Services

Further to the recent questions raised by my colleagues Councillor Cutts and Councillor Spencer, and in light of specific concerns raised in the media during the last two weeks:-

Would the Cabinet Member explain to what extent this authority can seek to ensure bus operators have cleared employees with the Criminal Records Bureau, before they are assigned to work on school buses in Nottinghamshire?

Response by Councillor Joyce Bosnjak, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People’s Services:

“I just want to thank Councillor Girling for his question and he seems to have a theme running here – two bus questions!

So, thank you for the question. It gives me an opportunity to re-assure other people about this particular important issue and I am glad of that opportunity to give that re-assurance.

When all school pupils with educational needs are being escorted it is, indeed, the escort who has to have CRB checks rather than the driver. However, if the pupil does not need an escort then the driver will be CRB checked.

For other bus usage, particularly from home to school transport, all drivers are required, by law, to hold a vocational licence issued by the Traffic Commissioner. Nottinghamshire and other authorities have long held the view that a CRB check should be a part of the issue/renewal of this licence.

So far this has not yet happened and in its absence the County Council has made it a condition of the award of contracts for home to school transport that contractors employ CRB checked drivers. Nottinghamshire County Council assists contractors in securing these checks from one of a number of agencies, although it is not able to undertake the checks directly on the contractor's behalf.

I hope this re-assures users of school buses in Nottinghamshire.

We are on the case and it is something that we would like to see done more rigorously and if we were able to ensure that this happens then we would do so.

I trust this answers your question Councillor Girling.”

Question from Councillor Richard Butler to the Cabinet Member for Environment

The Cabinet Member recently took part in the ceremonial handover of the management of seven country parks that were former colliery sites, to the Forestry Commission.

An eighth site, Cotgrave Country Park, which is a relaxing and natural rural resource, was not included in the transfer.

Can the Cabinet Member reassure residents of Cotgrave and visitors to the country park, that there are no “alternative plans” which could put this facility at risk?

Response by Councillor Stella Smedley, Cabinet Member for Environment:

“Can I thank Councillor Butler for his question.

Matters relating to Country Parks are now the domain of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Regeneration, but on this occasion I am quite happy to provide the answer.

I believe Councillor Butler's question is based on the fear or suspicion that Cotgrave Colliery might have been excluded from the maintenance agreement with the Forestry Commission because there were alternative development proposals for this site. If this is the case, I am happy to confirm that such a supposition is quite wrong and give the requested reassurance that there are no 'alternative plans' for Cotgrave Country Park.

At the time when the colliery reclamation programme was being developed, Cotgrave was the only colliery south of the River Trent and for operational and administrative reasons would have been very difficult for the Forestry Commission to include efficiently in their sites maintenance programme. To include Cotgrave would have required separate arrangements with a separate maintenance division within the Commission, and it simply would have been too far from other Forestry Commission holdings, south of the Trent, to be economically efficient and sustainable. This was the main reason that the Forestry Commission were unwilling to include it with the other seven sites in the maintenance package.

The handover of the management of the other colliery sites to the Forestry Commission will maintain those sites as important informal leisure facilities for the public in perpetuity - or at least for the 999 years of the formal lease agreement.

The maintenance and long-term management of the Cotgrave Country Park remains with the County Council, and will need to be managed according to available resources and other budget pressures. If circumstances change such that Cotgrave could be brought into the partnership maintenance agreement or an extension of the Forestry Commission lease, such proposals will have to be considered on their merits at the time.

However, the main focus is still to maintain Cotgrave as an informal leisure facility for the public.

I hope that re-assures you."

Question from Councillor Martin Brandon-Bravo to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services

Ministers have launched a *National Register for Gifted and Talented Education* to help teachers identify and stretch the brightest children, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds, whose true potential may in the past have gone unrealised.

Schools are also being encouraged to identify the top 5% of 11 – 10 year-olds nationally, for registration with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY).

In view of the welcome progress made since the 2003 Ofsted report which criticised Nottinghamshire LEA's support for gifted and talented pupils, can the Cabinet Member give an assurance that exceptionally able youngsters in this county are now receiving all the help required to reach their potential?

Can she also ensure that all Nottinghamshire schools are being proactive in registering eligible pupils with NAGTY?

Response by Councillor Joyce Bosnjak, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services:

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to update Members on the local authority's support for gifted and talented children and young people.

I would, also, like to think that we were encouraging all of our children in Nottinghamshire to reach their true potential.

I would, also, like to offer to Councillor Brandon-Bravo a more detailed response, showing statistical information about which schools are working towards this award and I have that for him, should he wish to see it? As I didn't think that you would all want to know in that detail?

However, I can assure Members that schools are receiving focused and effective help to enable our young people to reach their potential and the Department is actively encouraging registration with NAGTY.

To briefly sketch out how this works. Schools identify their gifted and talented pupils and 98% of all Nottinghamshire schools, by January 2006, have identified their top 10% of pupils. School Improvement Services follow up with this small minority who have not done so. So we soon chase them up if we don't think they are working as hard as they could be.

It is then necessary to make good provision for the children and the young people. To assist in this we have produced a guidance report – 'Providing for Gifted and Talented Pupils' and a support pack – 'Policy to Practice' to support gifted and talented pupils and these documents are highly regarded by schools and feature on the DfES Good Practice website. Schools are then encouraged to evaluate the quality of their provision against the DfES document 'Classroom Quality Standards.'

Turning to the next part of your question, Martin, Nottinghamshire schools are, also, encouraged to register highly able pupils with the National Association of Gifted and Talented Youth. 70% of Nottinghamshire's secondary schools have pupils registered with NAGTY nationally and a further 21% have links with the local and regional programmes. So this means that 91% of our schools are actively involved in this programme and I think that needs to be a credit to all of those concerned.

Finally, Members should be aware that the Gifted and Talented Steering Group has secured an additional £200K of external funding between 2004-2007 to promote this work.

We work hard to respond, positively, to DfES initiatives for our most able children and I can assure Members we will continue to do so and use every opportunity to obtain any funding from any source that will be useful to us.

Thank you.”

Question from Councillor Mark Spencer to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Is the Cabinet Member for Environment aware that in addition to the closure of Gravelly Hollow, Calverton Village is also subject to the closure of Flatts Lane and is about to be affected by the closure of Moor Lane for bridge repairs and George’s Lane for sewer works?

These closures will dramatically affect Calverton residents and will draw attention to the poor decision to close Gravelly Hollow rather than put in an improved, safer road junction.

Will she give urgent attention to finding the means to reopen Gravelly Hollow with an improved layout, and assure the people of Calverton that these roads will not be closed for a day longer than they have to be?

Response by Councillor Stella Smedley, Cabinet Member for Environment:

“Can I thank Councillor Spencer for his question. The Gravelly Hollow road closure at the A614 is for an experimental 18-month period and this will be reviewed towards the end of that time. The County Council inherited an accident problem at this junction when the A614 was de-trunked. At the time a strong case was made to the Highways Agency for them to fund a major junction improvement which was estimated to cost up to £1.5m, but this was rejected. The County Council continues to pursue funding, but in the meanwhile it has been necessary to address the accident record and the closure of the Gravelly Hollow arm of the junction was assessed as being the most effective means of doing this.

The closure of Flatts Lane is to allow it to be upgraded and improved in connection with a new development and the diversion should cause little inconvenience.

Similarly the George’s Lane closure is to allow the installation of a new sewer in connection with development and due to the depth of the sewer and width of the road there is no alternative to closure.

The Moor Lane closure is to enable works by the County Council to take place on two bridge decks. This has to be phased very carefully so as to maintain local access, and I confirm that this closure will not be in place at the same time as the one at George’s Lane.

Road closures are not approved lightly, but are frequently unavoidable on the grounds of safety. The times of closure are kept to a minimum and alternatives

to this course of action are always investigated. I can confirm that the phasing of these works has been very, very carefully considered and indeed other programmed works in the area have been put on hold as a consequence. All road closures are advertised in the papers and information releases are sent out in advance to inform others of the closures including the Emergency Services. The diversions are, of course, put in place with the appropriate signing.

I very much regret that these highway works have come so closely together for the local residents of Calverton, but the pressure for work to be carried out on the Highways in connection with development, by Utilities and, of course, by the County Council, is such that co-ordination of works, road closures and diversions is becoming ever more difficult.”

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – THURSDAY, 20TH JULY 2006

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 6.2

Question from Councillor M. J. Cox to the Chair of the Police Authority

Would the Chairman of the Police Authority join with me in welcoming the recent announcement made by the Home Secretary to withdraw the order to amalgamate Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire Police Forces?

Could he indicate the cost to Nottinghamshire Police and the Authority of carrying out the wishes of the previous Home Secretary?

Would he pursue the Home Office for a slice of the money they offered Nottinghamshire Police had they volunteered to amalgamate, which could now fund more local policemen on the beat?

Response by Councillor John Clarke, Chairman of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority:

“Thank you Mr Chairman.

I thank Councillor Cox for his question.

I do welcome the decision to withdraw the notice of the proposal to amalgamate.

As Councillor Cox is aware the Nottinghamshire Police Authority has been pressing the Home Office since September of last year to come up with firm proposals for financing and precepting of the proposed merger and for reassurance that the change would result in a real and immediate improvement in the standards of protective services in the County. There were, also, residual concerns about the governance arrangements that would be put in place.

Given that these issues remain largely unanswered, and that we had not been able to consult properly because of this, I think it was only right and proper that the Notice was withdrawn. As Councillor Cox is, also, aware the Police Authority had in fact, together with Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire lodged protective legal proceedings in the High Court to ensure that this happened. Thankfully in the light of the withdrawal of the Notice we have been able to stand these down.

We do recognise that there is a need for the forces and the authorities to work even more closely together in the coming months to demonstrate how, acting together, we can improve the provision of protective services and maximise the use of our resources. We hope, also, to convince the Home Office of the need to ensure that our region is better resourced to face the real challenges that we have.

The Force is not able to provide accurate figures for the costs in terms of staff time as these are still being calculated, but are estimated at £50,000. Consultant's fees, to-date, are in the order of £15000.

The Authority has incurred opportunity costs in terms of the Clerk and other staff time. The costs of the legal proceedings are of the order of £6000, but the Authority will, subject to legal advice, seek recovery of, or a contribution to, these costs from the Home Office.

In term of the Home Office's position on reimbursement of the overall costs of the merger the Home office has given the following response:

“What about the costs incurred by police forces and authorities?”

We are aware that police forces and authorities may approach the Home Office to meet the costs they have incurred in preparing for mergers and we will, of course, consider any such bids that are submitted. “

Thank you Mr Chairman.”