

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 17 December 2009

agenda item number **7a i**

## REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Challenges and Ambitions

I have been working with my Cabinet colleagues and my group, with good support from the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), to address the budget challenges and develop our new strategic plan to realise our ambitions and aspirations for the County.

I have also spent a considerable amount of time working to build positive relationships with many organisations who share our desire to ensure quality public services are delivered in Nottinghamshire.

As stated in a previous report to Council, I intend to maintain a regular and detailed dialogue with all of our borough and district partners at leader and chief executive level. During November I was pleased to host meetings with the Bassetlaw District and Rushcliffe Borough councils.

### Ceremony of Remembrance

At 11 a.m. on 11<sup>th</sup> November I joined the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Members and Officers of Nottinghamshire County Council and representatives of the Royal British Legion at the front of County Hall to observe the traditional Ceremony of Remembrance.

The ceremony commenced with buglers, Warrant Officer Owen Wheeldon BEM and Peter Roebuck (former Robin Hood Rifles) playing the Last Post.

Following the two minutes silence, wreaths were laid beneath the County's Memorial Plaque to remember our servicemen and women. The Chairman of the County Council was the first to step forward, followed by the County Chairman of the Royal British Legion and a representative of the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service.

### Rushcliffe Community Awards

On the evening of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November I attended the Rushcliffe Community Awards held at the British Geological Survey in Keyworth. I was

pleased to present the award for those people who have made a significant difference to the lives of children and young people in the borough. In addition I introduced a film about the 4Uth Festival held in Rushcliffe last year. 4Uth aims to celebrate young people and showcase the activities and services available locally, whilst offering the opportunity for youngsters to try something new and challenging.

### **County Councils Network Annual Conference**

On 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November I attended the County Councils Network (CCN) Annual Conference hosted this year by Durham County Council at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Durham.

The CCN conference is a major event in the local government calendar and brings together delegates including senior elected members and county chief executives from all CCN member authorities. I took the opportunity to discuss with other Council Leaders the challenges and opportunities we all face with regard to public sector finances.

The theme of the conference was around the recession and the contribution that local authorities and their partners can make to promoting recovery. The Chief Executive and I delivered a presentation showcasing best practice examples of 'locality working' in Nottinghamshire, such as the Councillors' Divisional Fund (CDF).

### **Meeting with Nottingham Pensioners' Action Group**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November I enjoyed a very constructive meeting with representatives of the Nottingham Pensioners' Action Group (NPAG). We discussed a range of issues affecting older people, including the Council's budget proposals which Cabinet had agreed for consultation earlier the same day. I intend to maintain a dialogue with NPAG and other public interest groups during the term of this administration.

### **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone**

On 20<sup>th</sup> November I was present to see the Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Sir Andrew Buchanan Bt. unveil a plaque to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone at County Hall.

Forty-four guests attended the ceremony, including members of the West Bridgford & District Local History Society, a PhD student from Sheffield (School of Architecture) who is writing a thesis on the architect E. Vincent Harris, former employees from the County Architects Department and our four Honorary Aldermen. It was particularly pleasing to see former Council Leader Sir Dennis Pettitt, to whom the Lord-Lieutenant referred in his speech.

### **HMS Sherwood Employers' Reception**

I was delighted to accept an invitation from the Commanding Officer HMS Sherwood, Commander Martin Clegg RNR and the local Supporting Britain's

Reservists & Employers (SaBRE) organisation to attend an Employers' Reception in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent, GCVO Honorary Rear Admiral Royal Naval Reserve.

The event was held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at HMS Sherwood on Chalfont Drive in Nottingham and provided an excellent opportunity to recognise and promote the work of the Royal Navy and SaBRE.

### **Raising Performance Conference**

On 25<sup>th</sup> November I delivered a presentation as part of the Nottinghamshire County Council 'Raising Performance Conference' in the Rufford Suite at County Hall. I focused on the challenges facing this authority in the next four years and set out our strategic priorities.

The conference received a presentation on the Nottinghamshire's Comprehensive Area Assessment by the Audit Commission's CAA Lead for Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City, Stephen Barnett.

### **Launch of the single Police Contact Number - 0300 300 99 99**

On 27<sup>th</sup> November I was present at the launch of a new single non-emergency telephone number for Nottinghamshire Police – 0300 300 99 99.

The new number replaces the individual numbers that were previously in operation across the county and was chosen following a public consultation where 96% of people agreed that a single number would make it easier to contact the force.

The launch at County Hall included an introduction by the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire, Julia Hodson and Temporary Chief Superintendent David Walker, head of the force control rooms. Both were keen to emphasise the important role councils and other local organisations and agencies can play in promoting the new number to Nottinghamshire residents.

### **Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, Prince's Trust Team Presentation**

The Prince's Trust Team Programme is a 12-week personal development course offering people aged 16-25 work experience, qualifications, practical skills and positive involvement in community projects. It provides young people with the opportunity to uncover hidden talents, assume some responsibility for tasks, develop team-working and communication skills, gain awareness of their local community and achieve nationally recognised qualifications.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December I was delighted to join Frank Swann, Chief Fire Officer, at a ceremony to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service team to graduate through this scheme. The team in question on this occasion was 'Team 31 Nottingham', who received their certificates from the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, Michael Rowen.

The Chief Fire Officer was proud to report that the Service now has its first serving operational firefighter to have come through its involvement with the Prince's Trust.

**'Welcome Home' Parade**

On 5<sup>th</sup> December I was proud to attend the Welcome Home Service for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Mercian Regiment at the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin in Nottingham. It was both a joyous and moving occasion, celebrating the safe return of these soldiers but thinking also about the anguish of the families of those who tragically lost their lives in this and previous tours of duty in Afghanistan.

**COUNCILLOR KAY CUTTS**  
**Leader of the County Council**