



meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 29th March 2007

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of the Report

This report covers some of my key activities as Leader since the last County Council meeting during February and March.

Meetings attended with the Chief Executive

- East Midlands Counties Leaders' and Chief Executives' meeting;
- 3 Cities/3 Counties Leaders' and Chief Executives' meeting.

Meetings between Leaders and Chief Executives of Nottinghamshire County Council and Districts

The Chief Executive and I met with the Leader and Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Meetings with District Councils are ongoing, so would be happy to hear from other Members about major items that might be raised in these meetings.

Routine meetings with the Nottingham Evening Post and Corporate Communications

The Deputy Leader and I continue to hold fortnightly meetings with a representative from the Nottingham Evening Post and Corporate Communications, where current and forthcoming areas of interest are discussed.

- Also, continue to hold fortnightly Communication Portfolio update meetings with the Deputy Leader and officers.
- Meet regularly with a representative from the CHAD, where current and forthcoming areas of interest are discussed.
- The Chief Executive and I continue to hold regular routine meetings with Nottinghamshire MPs, where current and forthcoming areas of interest are also discussed. Also, recently, met with Phil Woolas, MP.
- Lunches with the media.

Nottinghamshire Strategic Partnership Board meeting

The second meeting of the Nottinghamshire Strategic Partnership Board took place on Friday 2nd March. The members of the Board received a presentation on the current statistical data available and what this tells us about Nottinghamshire. This covered a range of key issues from the health of the population, worklessness and economic activity, and incidence of crime. Also on the agenda was a report from GOEM on the progress to date and the direction of travel of the Nottinghamshire Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA has been rated as amber and Jan Sensier, Deputy Director at GOEM, highlighted to the Board the key areas they needed to address to secure a green rating for the next review. The Board also discussed their role and accountabilities within the countywide partnership structure. Finally, a decision was made to move £65,000 of unspent pump-priming funding to fund the Mansfield and Ashfield Community Empowerment Networks for a further 6 months.

Ministerial visit – Pat McFadden

The purpose of Pat McFadden's visit to Nottinghamshire was to find out more about Link Age Plus. Nottinghamshire is one of eight local authorities in the country to be selected to take part in the Government's Link Age Plus programme. We have been awarded over £1.1 million, over two years, to improve services to older people (See Nottinghamshire 50+ leaflet for further information on what we are planning to do.)

The visit by Pat McFadden was an opportunity for us to show that Link Age Plus projects are starting to make a real difference to older people in Nottinghamshire. We are highlighting four projects which we are developing through Link Age Plus and the engagement of older people throughout the programme. These interactive sessions will look at the projects from different perspectives and explore a number of issues including:

- how older people have been involved in the development;
- how the projects are engaging with socially excluded older people;
- how the projects are making a difference from a partner and customer perspective.

Draft East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – Examination in Public

1. Cabinet approved the comments in response to the Submission Draft of the East Midlands Regional Plan at the meeting on the 6th December 2006, which was then forwarded to the Panel Secretariat to meet the consultation deadline of the 20th December. Members were advised that the Independent Panel who will be conducting the Examination in Public will be considering all the representations made on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and will be preparing a draft list of issues to be discussed at the Examination and a draft list of invitees. The Examination in Public (EIP) into the draft Regional Spatial Strategy is due to start on the 22nd May and will sit until the 18th July. The Panel

will be chaired by Stephen Crowe who also chaired the public examination of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham joint structure Plan in 2004. With the exception of a week in Lincoln, all sessions will take place in Leicester.

2. As the timescales are very short and do not fit in with the dates for Cabinet, at the meeting on the 6th December 2006, Members resolved that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups be authorised to take decisions regarding the future preparation of the Draft RSS on the understanding that a report on these decisions is taken to the next available meeting of Cabinet. The first such Leaders Meeting was held on the 16th March to consider the County Council's response to the draft list of matters and participants.
3. Steve Calvert and Sally Gill provided a detailed paper on the Draft List. Key issues included discussion on the matters for the Three Cities Sub Region and the Northern Sub Region and the omission in the matters of any discussion on climate change and employment land issues.
4. We discussed the participants invited to the Examination in Public Sessions. There are inconsistencies in the numbers of participants invited to the table. On Matter 1, Style of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy, there is only one seat for eight County and Unitary authorities, whilst the adjacent Regional Assemblies have two seats for five Assemblies. The County Council will be expected to share a seat with the other county and unitary authorities for most of the discussions, although for discussions on the Spatial Strategy, the authority will share one seat with Nottingham City Council. 'Hot seating' will require considerable management to ensure all views are represented.
5. Officers have now replied to the EIP Panel Secretariat with our views on the draft list of matters and participants.
6. The Panel will consider all comments made on the draft list and will publish a final list by the 10th April. This will confirm participants for the EIP and the matters to be discussed. Given the timescale, the authority will have to use the draft list of matters for preparing most of its responses.
7. The next meeting of this group on the 16th April will consider the County Council's response to the Matters for discussion at the EIP and provide an opportunity to report on the final list of matters and participants.
8. There will be a report to the 18th April meeting of Cabinet summarising the decisions made subsequent to the two Leaders meetings of 16th March and 16th April.

Shadow Greater Nottingham Executive Group

Met to discuss progress towards conurbation area agreement with greater Nottingham districts - City, Broxtowe, Rushcliffe, Gedling and Ashfield.

My door is always open. So please feel free to contact me with ideas/proposals/issues at any time.

COUNCILLOR DAVID KIRKHAM
Leader of the County Council