

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE REPORT: KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report seeks to update Members on various matters relating to the Leader's portfolio and the work of the Executive.

Information

2. **East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) Board** – The Statutory instrument that creates the East Midlands Combined County Authority has now passed through Parliament. That means that the 'Shadow' organisation (pre-Mayor) now formally and legally exists. The first formal meeting of the Authority will take place on 20 March 2024, to agree the basics of the constitution in advance on the election on 2 May 2024.
3. This means that Nottinghamshire County Council is now formally a Constituent Member of the new body, as per our previous decision taken at Full Council before Christmas. Officers continue to work with EMCCA to manage the transition and build the organisation to deliver on its new powers and funding.
4. **STEP Celebration** – It was a pleasure to be involved in opening the first new building at the STEP Fusion project in North Nottinghamshire, which is a £20billion investment in clean energy research that will create jobs and deliver opportunities in Nottinghamshire for decades to come.
5. Since the announcement the UK Atomic Energy Agency have hired their first local staff into the workforce and are now opening their permanent space on site ahead of the decommissioning and demolition of the old power station over the next couple of years.
6. **Prime Minister Visit** – It was wonderful to welcome Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to Mansfield in January, where he visited the Mansfield MyPlace at Westfield Folkhouse Young People's Centre on Westfield Lane as we announced a £3.5m new investment in a new Youth and Community Centre for Bellamy Estate, and the roll out of the Mansfield Family Hub services.
7. This investment is possible because of the Levelling Up Partnership Funding that we've secured from Government, and where we've worked with them to deliver projects that support 'early help' and prevention services in our communities that most need it.

8. The Prime Minister spoke to local business leaders, Youth Work staff and young people, and to local Councillors, answering questions on a variety of subjects. I'm really grateful for his continued commitment to our area, both for this investment and the millions of Levelling up funding we've had across the county. This is the third time the Prime Minister has been to see us in Nottinghamshire in just a few months to hear our views and priorities, he even took the time to meet a number of charities and community groups at the Mansfield Woodhouse Library during his visit.
9. **Switch Up Youth Services in Notts** – I recently joined Councillor Tracey Taylor, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, at the Switch Up Community Hub on Barringer Road, where we've been talking to the CEO, Marcellus Baz about how we can connect up and enhance our services through closer working with the community and charitable partners across the county.
10. Over the course of this year, I want to develop a new model for important front-line services like these where the Council is working much more in partnership with community organisations, supporting the expansion and development of community provision and making sure every young person who needs it can access youth services.
11. **Ministerial Visit** – It was great to have the Department for Transport Minister Anthony Browne MP in Nottinghamshire. He made the trip especially to look at our pilot project for on street Electric Vehicle charging. We've been working alongside Kerbo Charge and are beginning the roll out of a series of neat little gullies that stop wires trailing across the pavement and keep things safe and convenient. This will enable those without off street parking to have access to electric vehicle charging points.
12. We visited one of the residents who had benefitted from the scheme who explained how it had changed her life for the better. The pilot is open for Nottinghamshire residents to apply, all of the details can be found on the Council's website.
13. **Care After Combat** – Earlier this month I spoke at Portland College for the Care After Combat Resilience and Employability Conference, which focussed on 'unlocking the hidden Labour force'. CAC are a veteran's charity, helping ex-forces personnel to adapt to civilian life, particularly where they've ended up in the criminal justice system.
14. Portland are a disability charity and education provider who support disabled people with training, qualifications and employability. Both veterans who've been in the criminal justice system and disabled people form a big part of that 'hidden' work force. This event was all about improving the support for individuals who might be further from the jobs market, and also focussed on supporting employers with the training, resources, and confidence to recruit.
15. I spoke about the work Nottinghamshire County Council does in this space, with supported employment and through our Armed Forces Champion, amongst other things.

16. **Visits to Local Businesses** – As Leader I often receive invites to visit numerous local businesses across the county both big and small. Over the last few months I have had the pleasure of visiting several sites, including, ITP Aero UK who employ hundreds of people across the county. Based on the former Rolls Royce site in Hucknall they are a major supplier to their predecessor and continue to manufacture key components for aeroplane engines. The Aerospace and advance manufacturing sector is huge, this Council will continue to support growth and inward investment into our county through the soon to be established investment zones.
17. I also visited Tom and Mike at 200 Degrees Coffee Roast House. Not only do they provide coffee to a series of smaller cafes and coffee shops across the county, but they also launch special blends of coffee to raise funds and awareness to local charities and community groups. The Council uses 200 Degrees coffee in our cafeterias and have recently switched some of our supply to a special 'Switch Up' blend with funds being donated to the group through our purchase.
18. Another business I visited is Playmania Ltd soft play on Chesterfield Road in Mansfield, where I've met Miesha and Manager Kate, to talk about small businesses, the economy, and some of the things that could be done to try and help small businesses in our county. It's always really interesting to hear direct from local businesses about the environment they work in, the challenges they face and the ideas they have that could help moving forward.

Progress Report

19. **School Admissions** – On Friday 1st March thousands of Nottinghamshire parents discovered the outcome of their child's secondary school applications for places starting in autumn 2024. Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Education and SEND, announced earlier this month that more than 98% of the 9,446 on-time applications for September 2024 admissions in Nottinghamshire will be receiving a place at one of their preferred schools, increasing from last year.
20. Despite the large volume of applications, more than 91% of children are being offered their parents' first preference, with just under 6% offered their second preference, meaning nearly 97% have been offered either their first or second preference, also increasing from last year. The council follows the government's school admissions code, which ensures that all school places for maintained schools and academies are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.
21. **Notts Visitor Economy** - Nottinghamshire County Council and the region's official place marketing organisation, Marketing Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (MNN) have struck a landmark deal for the visitor economy division of MNN - Visit Nottinghamshire, to promote the county's tourism offer.
22. Visit Nottinghamshire, as the lead destination management organisation for the area, is in the best position to promote the county at a local, regional, and international level and attract visitors. By working in partnership, including with other councils and stakeholders in the city and county, we will continue to build momentum and create a thriving visitor economy.

23. This new partnership is a testament to our shared commitment to growing our visitor economy. We're looking forward to working with MNN to attract more visitors into the region, increasing the economic impact of tourism and showcasing the very best that Nottinghamshire has to offer.
24. **Nottsbus On Demand** - Residents in South Newark will be able to get on board a new on demand bus service from 8 April 2024. The new Nottsbus On Demand service is the next phase of Nottinghamshire County Council's demand responsive transport rollout following trials in North and South Ollerton, Mansfield and West Rushcliffe and will be operating in villages including Car Colston, Flintham and Elston between 9:30am and 2:30pm, Monday to Saturday.
25. We hope that this new service will offer residents a reliable, affordable and greener way to travel. By giving passengers the choice as to when they want to travel, we are also able to offer them greater flexibility with their travel plans.
26. **Broadband Upgrade** - Lightning-fast broadband will be delivered to tens of thousands of Nottinghamshire and West Lincolnshire homes and businesses after a £58m contract was signed under the government's national Project Gigabit rollout.
27. The upgrades will help grow the economy and create jobs by making it easier to set up a business and mean rural Nottinghamshire communities will have access to networks designed to meet people's needs for decades to come as the demand for fast connections continues to rise. Now the contract is signed, Connexin has started the planning and design works to enable the first premises to be connected to the network by early 2025.
28. **All decisions agreed at Cabinet are published online, you can find more details on the Council's Website - [Democratic Management System > Decisions](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/DEMOCRATIC-Management-System->Decisions) ([nottinghamshire.gov.uk](https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk))**

Decisions taken under Special Urgency procedures

29. None.

Other Options Considered

30. None

Reason for Recommendation

31. This is a noting report to update the Full Council on matters relating to the Leader's portfolio and the work of the Executive since the last meeting, as required by the Constitution.

Statutory and Policy Implications

32. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

33. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the contents of the report be noted.

COUNCILLOR BEN BRADLEY MP
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

For any enquiries about this report please contact:
Phil Rostance, Executive Officer

Constitutional Comments (HD)

34. Full Council is required to receive this report, which is to note, as set out in the Constitution.

Financial Comments (SES)

35. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- None