

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30 MARCH 2023
QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

WRITTEN RESPONSES PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING AS THE TIME LIMIT OF 60 MINUTES FOR QUESTIONS WAS REACHED

Question to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management from Councillor Lee Waters

Can the Cabinet Member give the Council an update on all costings related to the new Council Offices on Top Wighay Farm, Linby, near Hucknall? Is this on track to be delivered for £15.7million?

Response from Councillor Keith Girling, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management

The project is currently in the final costing stages after receiving detailed and comprehensive documentation from the contractor. The ratification of the contractor's documentation and subsequent negotiations will provide the detail of the final figure which will be reported for a formal decision later this year.

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Families from Councillor Anne Callaghan BEM

A study by the Food Foundation published this month has shown that 21.6% of households with children are experiencing food insecurity and that there are 3.7 times more families skipping meals than there were last year.

What actions are this Council undertaking with schools to support those children in Nottinghamshire who may not be in receipt of Free School Meals but present evidence of experiencing food insecurity?

Response from Councillor Tracey Taylor, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

There are 350-plus schools across Nottinghamshire, and when we also add post-16 colleges and pre-school provision such as nurseries, that's even more places where the vulnerable families you refer to might present themselves.

We also know – and it became even more apparent during Covid - that those settings know their children, young people, families and communities best, and are therefore best placed to identify those who are most vulnerable.

These settings find ways every day to support children and families and we thank and recognise them for it. Where they can't provide direct support, they signpost the children and families to services or organisations that can help.

Regarding what you describe as 'food insecurity' for vulnerable families, and as explained in my reply to Councillor Welsh's question at the Full Council meeting, this

Council has committed to support Food Redistribution Schemes that are now locally delivered by voluntary and community organisations rather than Children's Centres.

These newly funded Food Redistribution Schemes do not operate in schools, except for some operated by Bassetlaw CVS Food Hubs, but they are all likely to support families with school age children.

This approach in effect extends the offer to families of children of all ages – not just under 5's - and makes these outlets less stigmatised, resulting in greater access and much larger numbers taking up the opportunity offered by this County Council *funded*, but not *delivered*, programme. It reflects the Council's commitment to being an enabler, working to develop stronger, more resilient communities and families.

In addition, the County Council has developed a network across the county of Holiday Activities and Food (programme) clubs that come at no cost to families in receipt of Free School Meals, and only a small charge to those not in receipt of Free School Meals.

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment from Councillor John 'Maggie' McGrath

Could the Cabinet Member confirm what plans are in place to resurface Pasture Road and to incorporate a safe crossing route at Albany school, as part of the wider plans for cycle routes and welcomed highways improvements to Stapleford?

Response from Councillor Neil Clark MBE, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

We are supporting Broxtowe Borough Council in the development of their Towns Deal plans for Stapleford.

Like you, I am keen that we consider a "whole street" approach and that other elements such as the resurfacing of Pasture Road and the crossing route for Albany School are fully considered in developing a package of proposals. I've asked Highways officers to continue to work with you as these proposals are developed and feasibility is assessed.

Question to the Cabinet Member for Finance from Councillor Steve Carr

Would the Cabinet Member agree to write to all small community groups and organisations impacted by the decision to reduce the Councillors Divisional Fund by £5000 to £3000 to manage their expectations in the next financial year and sign the letter as Cabinet Member for Finance at Nottinghamshire County Council?

Response from Councillor Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Finance

As I explained in the budget debate in February, the Councillors Divisional Fund (CDF) enables Nottinghamshire County Council members to make small, one-off awards to people or groups in their electoral division for community benefit.

Many councils don't operate a fund like CDF at all, so it is to Nottinghamshire County Council's credit that our members will still have a significant pot of £3,000 each to allocate at their discretion.

County councillors do not necessarily know at the start of the year which community groups or organisations might approach them for CDF assistance, so it is not possible for me to pre-empt who those groups may be, let alone write to them all.

Every county councillor's individual pot starts at £3,000 and it is for each member to decide how many requests they wish to support, what share of that pot they wish to award, and to manage the expectations of local groups and organisations accordingly, if the need arises.

Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health from Councillor Paul Henshaw

Ambition 3 of the Nottinghamshire Plan states that "Success means [...] the Care Quality Commission ratings for all our adults social care services is 'good' or above."

How many Residential Social Care homes in Nottinghamshire are currently not rated 'good' or above?

Response from Councillor Matt Barney, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Overall, in Nottinghamshire, there are 278 services which are registered to deliver residential care:

- Approximately 80% of all residential services are rated as 'good' (201 services rated as 'good' in total) or 'outstanding';
- In fact, Nottinghamshire has a total of 21 residential services which are rated as 'outstanding' by The Care Quality Commission, which is high in comparison with our neighbouring authorities, and this number has been static since 2021;
- There are 52 services rated as either 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'. This is approximately 19% of the services across Nottinghamshire. Of these, only 2 services are rated as 'inadequate'. The number of 'inadequate' services is comparatively low.
- In Nottinghamshire we have seen that there has been a reduction in the number of 'inadequate' services since August 2021, when there were 7 services rated as 'inadequate'.

There are 122 registered care homes for people under 65:

- 87 services are rated as 'good' and 12 rated as 'outstanding'. Therefore, over 80% of registered services for people under 65 are rated 'good' or outstanding';
- 19 services are rated as 'requires improvement' and 1 rated as 'inadequate'.

There are 156 registered care homes for people over 65:

- 114 services are rated as 'good' and 9 rated as 'outstanding'. Therefore, almost 79% of registered services for people over 65 are rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' in Nottinghamshire.
- 31 services are rated as 'requires improvement' and 1 rated as 'inadequate'.

I think there is fair evidence of progress over the last two years, and we are performing comparatively well against neighbouring authorities. We also have our joint team with health who work with providers to improve alongside the CQC, and who help us to be assured that the people we support receive good quality care.

You are correct that under Ambition Three in the Nottinghamshire Plan – 'Keeping Children, Vulnerable Adults and Communities Safe', we state that success means: 'The Care Quality Commission ratings for all our adult social care services is 'good' or above'.

Self-evidently, we have not yet fully achieved that ambition, but I hope you will recognise the merit in this administration – in fact, any administration – setting and chasing a challenging target, especially in a field where we don't directly run these services, but rather, monitor, intervene and assist when care providers are not meeting the standards they should.

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment from Councillor Penny Gowland

If the Cabinet Member shares my concerns about bad driving and parking around take away outlets, why are enforcement officers struggling to tackle this issue and what plans are in place to tackle antisocial driving?

Response from Councillor Neil Clark MBE, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

During the pandemic, take-away retail shops that use app-based deliveries became increasingly popular. This business model requires available delivery drivers who wait near the shop, and the busiest periods are typically in the evenings and on weekends. Enforcement officers are aware of the problems caused by these drivers and frequently visit the worst locations. However, delivery drivers are usually near their vehicles and can move them before receiving a Penalty Charge Notice for parking in restricted areas. Legislation does not permit camera enforcement for parking on double or single yellow lines, so the presence of enforcement officers typically results only in vehicles being moved whilst they are present. In addition, members of the public parking to collect orders will also be close by and will also move their vehicles if they see an approaching Officer.

There are several hundred of these outlets in the county, and many experience similar parking issues in the evening. Enforcement officers try to address as many as

possible, but as mentioned earlier, if demand for fast food deliveries continues, foot patrols are unlikely to have a significant impact on the traffic issues generated by these businesses. The County Council regularly raises and highlights the difficulties of enforcing certain types of parking behaviour through Trade Associations and the Department for Transport and there is the scope for some legislative change in the future around the offence of obstruction.

The wider issue of anti-social driving rather than parking is outside the scope of the Council's enforcement service and is an issue for the Police to handle.