

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. **Devolution Consultation** – Following the extraordinary Full Council held on Friday 4 November 2022 all 4 upper tier Councils in Nottinghamshire, Nottingham, Derby, and Derbyshire agreed to go ahead with a public consultation on devolution.
3. The consultation, which was open to residents, businesses, community and voluntary groups, and other organisations in the region ended on Monday 9 January 2023. I am extremely grateful to all of those who have taken the time to feedback into the process and share their views on the Devolution proposals.
4. Throughout the consultation period I met with several key stakeholders and attended a series of public engagement events across the county to discuss the £1.14 Billion deal in more detail. Here I had the opportunity to hear first-hand the kind of things residents and businesses would like us to achieve with extra local powers and funding for skills, transport and the potential to bring new investment and jobs to the area. This was also a chance for the upper tier Leaders to answer any questions or queries that had arisen from the consultation and encourage as many people as possible to take part and give feedback.
5. **Taking a Leading National Role on Devolution** – As well as local engagement on our devolution proposals, I've continued to represent our Council and region in national conversation. Including, in recent weeks, presenting our work and our findings to the Westminster Policy Forum's discussion on devolution progress, and working with the Onward Think Tank on the further potential of agreeing devolution plans with other Government Departments.
6. **Budget Consultation** – As we look to set our budget for 2023/24 it is extremely important that we hear the views of residents across the county. On the 17 November 2022 we launched our budget consultation to ask the people of Nottinghamshire which of our services are most important to them, what they think our priorities should be and where there could be potential opportunities for savings. The consultation period closed on the 2 January 2023, I would like to thank all of those who have taken part in the consultation for their time and input into the process.

7. In addition to the consultation, Members will be aware that we are due to take our annual Budget decisions in the coming weeks, and so a significant amount of time and energy over the course of recent months has gone in to working with colleagues in Cabinet, and with Senior Officers, on setting a positive Budget for 2023/24 that can make our Council sustainable for the future, whilst protecting and enhancing our services for residents.
8. **HS2 Executive Board** – On Wednesday 21 December 2022 I chaired the HS2 Executive Board whose role it is to direct and co-ordinate the delivery of the HS2 Growth Strategy. Here we received a progress report from the East Midlands Development Corporation and its partners on the strategy and received the latest update on the Toton and Ratcliffe on Soar Proposals.
9. **Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Proposal Submitted** – Since November we have been in discussion with senior Government Ministers about our local bus services in Nottinghamshire and how the BSIP funding could potentially be reconfigured to be more closely aligned with local need in our area.
10. Earlier this month we submitted a revised BSIP proposal to the Rt Hon Richard Holden MP, this will provide the flexibility we need with the funding to make sure we can preserve and enhance bus services in Nottinghamshire.
11. **University Engagement** – Throughout November and December I have attended multiple meetings with our universities to share updates on our plans for 2023. We discussed the devolution proposals and consultation document along with potential opportunities arising from the Governments budget announcements, looking at investment zones, Levelling Up funding and other joint funding opportunities across Nottinghamshire.
12. **LGA 12 Month Highways Peer Review** – On Monday 19 December 2022 the Local Government Association (LGA) carried out their 12-month peer review of our highways review work. I joined Councillor Neil Clarke MBE as we discussed the improvements that have been made by the Council following the adoption of its new highway's improvement plan and our aspirations for the future. We had very positive feedback on the day from the LGA representatives noting the good pace of change, our medium-term plans for investment and moving to a right first-time approach. In fact, they said it was a best practice example of how to undertake a service review.
13. Following the highways review panel, a number of recommendations were made which are already having a huge impact on our services and delivery. Our additional repair teams have helped increase the capacity of repairs across the county, as a result this has reduced the number of temporary repairs by 60% and delivered a four-fold increase in the amount of permanent repairs.
14. Other recommendations such as the residents 'pop up' survey scheme and use of QR codes in our scheme letters is also proving very successful, giving residents the opportunity to feed in their views on the works and schemes taking place on their roads. Following the relaunch of the parish Lenghtsman Scheme we now have 41 trained operatives on the ground tackling small jobs like mowing, cleaning, and keeping local villages looking great throughout the year.

15. We also discussed our new highways hub which is now operational at the Bilsthorpe Highways Depot and how this will improve the efficiency and quality of road repairs across Nottinghamshire. Formal feedback from the Peer Review is expected later this month.
16. **The Lord-lieutenant Sir John Peace** – In December I was pleased to host Sir John Peace at a meeting with Mansfield Businesses. Among many other things, the Lord-lieutenant for Nottinghamshire is the East Midlands ambassador for Business in the Community, it was a great opportunity to discuss local and national opportunities, including Devolution, the East Midlands Development Corporation and plans around Toton and HS2.
17. **Working on Health and Care Pressures** – Alongside our day-to-day work on managing our care offer and duties within the County, I have organised a meeting with our Director of Adult Social Care, NUH CEO and the Chair of the Integrated Care Board, along with myself, to meet with Ministers from the Department of Health and Care on 17 January 2023. The meeting is aimed at raising issues and making representations regarding hospital discharge and health/care integration.

Progress Report

18. **Partnership Funding Support for Homes for Ukraine** - The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched on 14 March 2022 by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The scheme allows individuals resident in the UK to sponsor named Ukrainian guests. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support.
19. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor John Cottee recently approved an allocation of £726,000 to housing authorities in the county to support the work they are doing to help reduce the risk of relationship breakdown and homelessness for our guests in Nottinghamshire.
20. **Youth Investment Fund (YIF) Submission** - Following the 2021 spending review Government announced it is investing £368 million in youth services in England across the next three financial years.
21. In early December the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People Councillor Tracey Taylor approved Nottinghamshire County Councils submission, which if successful, would provide external funding to enhance youth service provision in Nottinghamshire, targeting areas of greatest need. The outcome of the application is due to be announced over the coming months.
22. **Green Investment Fund** - The Green Investment Fund was set up to help deliver the Corporate Environment Strategy (CES) objectives, improving the environmental performance of the Council's operations.
23. This year's Green Investment Fund has welcomed applications from a number of Service areas across the council looking to support the delivery of the Corporate Environment Strategy Action Plan and the 2030 Carbon Neutrality target.
24. On the 28 November 2022 the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment Councillor Neil Clarke MBE approved six green investment fund projects which will share part of the

£250,000 fund. The County Council has repeatedly committed itself to improving the environmental performance of its operations and these projects will help to do that.

25. All decisions agreed at Cabinet are published online, you can find more details on the Council's Website - [Democratic Management System > Decisions \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](http://nottinghamshire.gov.uk)

Decisions taken under Special Urgency procedures

26. None.

Other Options Considered

27. None

Reason for Recommendation

28. 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

29. 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

30. 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 (CEH)

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

Financial Comments (SES)

32. 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