

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2021**  
**QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

**WRITTEN RESPONSES PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING AS THE MEMBER WAS NOT IN THE CHAMBER**

**Question to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Jason Zadrozny**

Can the Leader please give the Council a statement on the Integrated Rail Plan?

**Response from Councillor Ben Bradley MP, Leader of the Council**

Note: this question was taken together with question 4 from Councillor Foale which was answered in the meeting and is recorded in Appendix A to the minutes of the meeting.

**Question to the Chairman of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee from Councillor Tom Hollis**

What are Nottinghamshire County Council doing to retain and recruit staff in our care homes?

**Response from Councillor Boyd Elliott, Chairman of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee**

Recruitment and retention of staff in Social Care is challenging right across all types of care and support, and Care Homes in Nottinghamshire are included in our workforce strategy. Care Homes are facing a particular challenge as they cope with the departure of staff who have declined to have the Covid 19 Vaccination which is now a requirement in law. This has added to the impact that Care Homes were already experiencing for various reasons including competition for staff from other sectors that are experiencing workforce shortages such as retail, hospitality and logistics.

The Council's Quality and Market Management Team lead the work on building capacity and sustaining the market. We are launching a recruitment and advertising campaign, through the Council's own channels, to attract people to work in care in the County.

Working alongside Providers, we are looking to use the DHSC Workforce Grant on a range of recruitment and retention initiatives which includes working to increase the profile of care work, such as showcasing a day in the life of a care home, and focused incentive schemes to attract people.

This compliments existing work including:

- Webinars to develop Provider's approaches and share best practice
- Making the most of the Integrated Care System to join up recruitment across Health and Social Care
- Developing career pathways throughout social care and also into healthcare roles

- Training and Development for Care Home Managers and staff including coaching and support as well as access to formal training such as medications management
- Lead to Succeed programme for aspiring managers.

### **Question to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Paul Henshaw**

In light of the widespread concern about Members of Parliament taking on other paid roles, is the Leader sure that he can fulfil his paid work as County Councillor, Leader of the Council and MP and at the same time retain the trust and confidence of his electorate?

### **Response from Councillor Ben Bradley MP, Leader of the Council**

It won't surprise you to know that yes I do think it works and yes I do think I can do it. In fact I think it is beneficial for all involved, otherwise, as I've been very up front about since day one, I wouldn't do it. The day that I think there's nothing for this Council, or for Notts or Mansfield, to be gained by me joining up these two roles is the day I hand my notice in to my group and they can pick somebody else. I wanted to do this because I think that some of the biggest challenges we've had in recent years, and that we have now, will benefit from my being able to speak directly with Ministers and to join the dots.

We've seen examples of outcomes from that already, with the changes to our Integrated Care Boundaries that we successfully lobbied for, or with the significant movement on the Integrated Rail Plan from where things were back in the spring and what we ended up with. I was able to take the arguments about Toton and the importance of that area as a hub for economic growth directly to the Prime Minister, directly to the Transport Secretary, and to ensure that we have the opportunity now to develop that site, to the benefit of both the county and region's economy, and to my Mansfield constituents who will be able to access the jobs down the Maid Marian Line. That just didn't exist back in May, and I think that is an example of where we've already made a real and significant difference.

We continue to see examples of those opportunities, where things are still in progress but where we've made significant inroads in to some age old problems that we've been talking about for years. On devolution, for example, we're in to the final five or six counties talking to Government about pathfinder devolution deals. We've been round in circles on that trying and not quite getting there for many years, but I am confident that by joining the dots, making the links between local and national, we can finally get it over the line. We're seeing it with the arguments and the progress on our wider regional package of measures, including the Freeport and Development Corporation, and where Ministers now in recent speeches and meetings have started to repeat our priorities and our package back to me, and through officials, because we're making the case for these major priorities in the heart of Government. We've also made significant progress in repairing relationships and working together more closely on a local level too, and I'm grateful for the work that local District Leaders and the City are doing to move things forward too.

I've compared it to being a Government Minister, and though colleagues will know that I've never sought ministerial office, I think it remains absolutely true that the commitment is very similar to that of a Government Minister, who has an additional very busy role alongside his job as an MP. That Ministerial role is different and separate from being an MP, but one where you can make a very real difference to your constituents as well as the country by tackling issues on a national level. The only difference here being that I have taken on that executive role – because being a backbench MP is a non-executive function of course – I've taken on that executive role here locally instead of nationally.

So in short, yes I'm happy that it works. I also don't think the national debate about second jobs is focused on roles like this, in fact I am fairly certain that it is not. The electorate will of course have chance to judge me based on my results, and whilst I have always been very happy to discuss how things are working across local and national media, to update constituents on my social media and to be very open about it all, I'm grateful for the chance to discuss it even further.