



meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

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agenda item number

## REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

### **BBC *Family Wanted* Campaign**

Nottinghamshire Children and Young People's Department Adoption Service has been involved in planning and working with the BBC on its groundbreaking *Family Wanted* season, which was launched on 11 July 2007.

The *Family Wanted* season seeks to find permanent homes, through adoption or long-term fostering for specific children with complex needs. It also aims to dispel myths about who can adopt or foster and encourages people to put themselves forward and find out more about becoming adopters and foster carers.

The *Family Wanted* season consists of specially commissioned plays and documentaries as well as adoption/fostering storylines in popular programmes.

One of our staff was involved in editing the national magazine produced to go to all people who make contact with the BBC – this is an excellent magazine, which incidentally features an article about one of Nottinghamshire's Adoption team social workers.

One of our children, for whom we are family finding, was featured last week in an appeal film on BBC 1 and two further children were featured on the *Video Nation* website. Furthermore, these three Nottinghamshire children and two others are featured in the family finding magazine which accompanies this series. We are hoping that our involvement in this will result in families for these specific children and an increase in general enquiries.

Whilst it is too early to know whether we have achieved these aims we do know that the children who have been involved have enjoyed the experience and that the authority has been very well represented both by them and by the staff who have been involved with this project.

## **Foster Carers Conference - 5 July 2007**

On 7 July 2007, I attended the annual Foster Carers' Conference at The Queen Elizabeth (Endowed) School in Mansfield. The Conference was organised by a group of Staff and Foster Carers and was attended by over 150 Foster Carers and Foster Children. The theme of the Conference was "play" and staff from the Play Service, the Youth Service and from the Fostering Service, provided workshops, presentations, activities and support throughout the day. The Conference was a good example of integrated working, with staff from different service areas working together. The Conference was also a very good example of partnership working, with Foster Carers and staff working together to produce a positive and fun experience for all who attended.

## **Equality and Diversity**

Work has been taking place over several months with groups of young people, youth workers and artists to produce materials that publicise the issues of equality and diversity within Nottinghamshire. This work has culminated in the production of a diversity DVD and poster, which will be distributed throughout the County within Young People's Centres, Libraries and other County Council buildings.

The final poster and slogan designs were chosen from a short-listed number by young people, members, staff and members of the public at displays that were held at The Old Library, Mansfield and County Hall. Over 250 people took part in the survey, with the result that the 'We are Notts' poster and the 'All different, All Equal' slogan were chosen.

A display was produced as a part of the project and this too will tour the County, highlighting diversity issues and encouraging debate regarding the subject.

## **Mobile Youth Provision**

Funding has been obtained from the Youth Capital Fund to enable the provision of seven specially commissioned vehicles for use throughout the County. Each vehicle is costing approximately £80,000 and will be fully-equipped to provide a comprehensive youth service within the areas visited. It is anticipated that public access PCs will be available for use, utilising the Netloan library system, and investigations are currently being undertaken to decide the optimum method for delivering this.

The seven vehicles will enable the provision of quality mobile youth work within each of the seven districts. Six of the vehicles will be located within a district (there is already a new vehicle based in Broxtowe) and the remaining vehicle will be specifically equipped to operate as a mobile health project, targeting those areas around the County that have high levels of health-related issues.

The first two vehicles are due to be commissioned by the end of August 2007, with the remaining vehicles due to come on-line by November 2007.

It is anticipated that a launch event will be held once all the vehicles are in service.

## **Disability Support Scheme Summer Programme**

The summer programme provides opportunities for disabled young people to attend a variety of residential events from May to September. This year three camps are being run in the UK, each of which will cater for 20 young people and is staffed by ten adults. A trip to France provides a week's holiday for 19 young people and a week at the Bendrigg Adventure Base will provide activities for another 19 young people.

The programme is staffed by a mixture of Disability Support Team workers and Special Coaches drivers, all of whom have given their time voluntarily.

The aim of the programme is to create the opportunity for young people to develop their independence and social skills and to provide time for them to spend with their peers. They also work towards accreditation awards during the programme.

## **Breaks Holiday Scheme**

The Scheme provides adventure holidays for disabled young people who live within the County and City of Nottingham, who are aged between 8 – 19 years. There are five week-long camps, which would normally be based at the Lakeside Adventure Base, but have had to be moved to the Robin Hood campsite at Blidworth, due to the recent bad weather.

The young people take part in a range of adventurous activities, day trips and other creative activities, working towards an ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) youth activity award at the end of the camp. The staff include young people who are taking part in the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, for whom the camp contributes towards the residential element of the award. Affected by flooding, the programme started a week late on 30 July, finishing on 25 August.

## **“Majestic Moments” – Arts Support Service Summer Concert at the Majestic Theatre, Retford**

A year round programme of performance opportunities for young people in Nottinghamshire maintained schools is a feature of local authority provision for arts in the Children and Young People's Department. This group of young people are known as County Performers.

It has been a successful year of development and improvement in the County Performance group of the Arts Support Service which culminated in a summer concert on 11 July 2007. The venue for this concert was the recently refurbished Majestic Theatre at Retford and was the first time that the County Performance group has performed in the town.

Drawn from 35 of our schools, around 80 talented performers, making up the Nottinghamshire Young People's County Choir, Concert Band and Symphony Orchestra, performed a wide variety of music and styles ranging from a vocal version of Mission Impossible to the Finale of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony to an appreciative audience of some 400 people.

## **Nottinghamshire Learning Centre – OFSTED Inspection July 2007**

The Nottinghamshire Learning Centre (NLC) had its first OFSTED school inspection over 11 and 12 July 2007. The judgment was that the NLC is 'overall satisfactory with good and outstanding features'. Particularly noteworthy judgments were:

- learners are making at least satisfactory progress and many are making good and outstanding progress. This is a particularly welcome judgment as most young people on the roll of the NLC have often been disengaged from learning for sometime before going to the NLC and were previously making no or little progress.
- the quality of teaching and learning was again found to be at least 'satisfactory' with some examples of good and outstanding. Teaching was judged to be only just below 'good'. This is another welcome judgment, bearing in mind that many of the young people are 'hard to teach' and often disillusioned with learning.
- leadership and management were found to be 'satisfactory' with some 'outstanding' features. The inspection found that the leadership of the headteacher, deputy head and special individual programmes coordinator was exceptional and warranted a judgment of 'outstanding'.
- capacity to improve and the overall effectiveness of the NLC self evaluation was judged to be 'good'.

The inspection gives the NLC and the County Council a very secure judgment that should impact favourably on the Joint Area Review of Nottinghamshire children and young people's services scheduled for next year. It means that Nottinghamshire makes good quality provision for young people out of school and those requiring specialist provision for emotional and behavioural difficulties. Potential to improve further is strong, and over the next few years the NLC should achieve an overall rating of 'good'.

The inspection outcomes need to be placed in a national perspective where two thirds of out of school provision is judged to be 'inadequate' in a number of respects. This places the NLC amongst the most effective out of school provisions in the country, and is something for us to be proud of.

## **Official Opening - Prospect Kilton Children's Centre - 9 July 2007**

The launch of the latest Sure Start Children's Centre was held on 9 July 2007. The Prospect Kilton Children's Centre is attached to St Augustine's Infant

School and covers the North East and East of Worksop, offering a service to 550 children aged 0-5, and their families. The families, children and staff planned the day as a celebration of diversity, and there was much art work, play activities and information around this theme. A highlight at lunchtime was the cutting of a celebratory cake, made for the occasion by a parent from another Bassetlaw Children's Centre, who had been introduced to cake making there, and now runs a business – this is exactly the sort of empowering and aspirational activity that is offered to parents in all Children's Centres – and taken up by many.

Guests were welcomed by the Chair of the County Council, with speeches by myself and local MP John Mann. A local parent also spoke to the guests of how important the support of the Children's Centre had been for her. Co-ordinator Una Daniel thanked the head of St Augustine's for her support. In Bassetlaw all the Children's Centres are managed on behalf of the County Council by North Notts College, a unique partnership in the country, and the combination of established County Council services and supports with a strong adult education specialism is proving very productive for families.

The ribbon was cut by children, a County Council plaque unveiled, and a day of activities enjoyed by children, parents, staff and partners.

## **Support for Flooded Schools**

During the recent floods 40 Nottinghamshire schools were affected – some very severely.

Schools in the north of the county were particularly affected with three schools, North Leverton, North Wheatley and Walkeringham Primary Schools suffering major damage. Thanks to the work of headteachers, staff, local communities and officers, all schools were able to continue to provide education soon after the water levels had dropped. The three worst affected schools however will not be returning to their refurbished buildings for some months although they will be operating in a combination of local facilities.

The DCSF in July made a flood recovery grant available to the most severely affected authorities. Nottinghamshire received £858,000 to help with repair, replacement and temporary accommodation. Whilst insurance cover also helps with recovery, the total costs are likely to be in excess of £2 million.

## **Painting Competition for recruiting governors - 13 July**

To help recruit new governors to schools, Governor Services recently organised a poster competition for schools. Over 200 posters from 13 primary schools were received making the judging by the members of the Governance Consultation Group a difficult task. The winner was Aisla Henson from Toton Bispham Drive Junior School, the runners up being Leah Barker from Flintham Primary, Newark, Cerys Gardiner from High Oakham Primary School in Mansfield and Alistair Lee, also from Bispham Drive. Prizes will be awarded at the Governors Conference in November.

## **Testicular cancer leaflet produced by Nottinghamshire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership**

An innovative new leaflet to highlight the signs of testicular cancer to young men has been produced by Nottinghamshire County Teenage Pregnancy Partnership. In addition to working to reduce under 18 conceptions, the Partnership works towards improving young people's sexual health. Young men have been recognised as a group who are traditionally reluctant to access sexual health advice and services.

The leaflet uses a sporting theme and provides easy-to-follow but detailed information, facts and guidance on the signs and symptoms of the disease, where to go for further advice, and the types of treatment available if testing does prove positive. It is thought to be unique amongst leaflets about the disease in that it specifically targets young men, who are most commonly affected - with higher rates amongst the 15 to 35 age group. Testicular cancer is highly curable when detected and treated early – it has almost a 100% recovery rate.

The leaflet has been launched with the support of Nottingham Rugby Club and a group of young men who were involved throughout the leaflet's development. Following the launch it is hoped that other sporting teams from across the county, including cricket, ice hockey and football, will also help to raise awareness of the dangers of testicular cancer by promoting the leaflet.

The cost of design and production of the leaflet was £575 for 5,000 copies and this has been funded by the Teenage Pregnancy Local Implementation Grant.

The leaflet is available free to services and youth settings across the county. It is also being offered for purchase by organisations outside of the county.

### **Attendance awards**

On 12 July the Chairman of the County Council and myself presented certificates to six young people who had achieved a high level of school attendance. Stephen Jones from Newark High School achieved 100% attendance in each of his five years of secondary education. Five other young people were presented with certificates in recognition of their achieving a high level of attendance despite difficult circumstances such as serious illness. Parents and schools also attended the presentation at County Hall.

### **COUNCILLOR JOYCE BOSNJAK**

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services

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