

Meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

Date Thursday, 26th January 2012 (10.00 am – 7.01 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Keith Walker (Chairman)

Carol Pepper (Vice Chairman)

	Reg Adair	A	Bruce Laughton
	John Allin		Keith Longdon
	Fiona Asbury		Rachel Madden
	Chris Barnfather		Geoff Merry
A	Victor Bobo		Mick Murphy
	Joyce Bosnjak		Philip Owen
	Richard Butler		Sheila Place
	Steve Carr		Darrell Pulk
	Steve Carroll		Mike Quigley MBE
	Allen Clarke		Mrs Wendy Quigley
	Ged Clarke		Alan Rhodes
	John Clarke		Ken Rigby
	L B Cooper		Kevin Rostance
	John Cottee		Mrs Sue Saddington
	Michael J Cox		Mel Shepherd MBE
	Jim Creamer		S Smedley MBE JP
A	Bob Cross		Mark Spencer MP
	Mrs Kay Cutts		June Stendall
	V H Dobson		Andy Stewart
A	Sybil Fielding		Martin Suthers OBE
	Stephen Garner		Lynn Sykes
A	Michelle Gent		David Taylor
	Glynn Gilfoyle		Parry Tsimbiridis
	Keith Girling		Gail Turner
	Kevin Greaves		Stuart Wallace
	John M Hemsall		Les Ward
	Stan Heptinstall MBE		Gordon Wheeler
	Rev. Tom Irvine		Chris Winterton
	Richard Jackson		Brian Wombwell
	Rod Kempster		Martin Wright
	Eric Kerry		Liz Yates
	John Knight		Jason Zadrozny

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mick Burrows	(Chief Executive)
Jayne Francis-Ward	(Assistant Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer)
David Pearson	(Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection)
Anthony May	(Children, Families & Cultural Services)
Tim Gregory	(Environment & Resources)
Sara Allmond	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Carl Bilbey	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Claire Dixon	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Martin Done	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Chris Holmes	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Lyndsey Parnell	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)
Michelle Welsh	(Policy, Planning and Corporate Services)

OPENING PRAYER

Upon the Council convening, prayers were led by Richard Cooper in the absence of the Chairman's Chaplain.

Members stood in silence in memory of Councillor Thomas A J Pettengell.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: 2011/108

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the County Council held on 15th December 2011 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following apologies for absence were received:-

Medical/Illness

- Councillor Bob Cross
- Councillor Bruce Laughton

Other

- Councillor Sybil Fielding
- Councillor Michelle Gent

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

(a) Thomas A J Pettengell

The Chairman and Councillors Mrs Kay Cutts, Alan Rhodes, Stan Heptinstall MBE, June Stendall, Richard Jackson, Eric Kerry, Darrell Pulk, Gordon Wheeler, S Smedley MBE JP, Keith Girling and Joyce Bosnjak spoke in tribute to the late Tom Pettengell.

(b) Agenda Order

The Chairman changed the order of the agenda to take the questions to the Chair of the Police Authority at 1.45pm when the Chair of the Police Authority arrived.

(c) Constituency Issues

Set out in Appendix A to these minutes is a full note of the issues relating to his division discussed by Councillor Stephen Garner.

5. PETITIONS

(a) PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The following petitions were presented to the Chairman as indicated below:-

1. Councillor Martin Suthers OBE – Petition regarding street lighting in Bingham.
2. Councillor Reg Adair – Petition regarding speed reduction in Bunny.
3. Councillor Mike Quigley MBE – Petition regarding a residents' parking scheme in Spicers Court, Retford.
4. Councillor Jason Zadrozny - Petition regarding broadband access in Teversal
5. Councillor Joyce Bosnjak and Martin Wright – Petition against the closure of Sherwood Industries
6. Councillor Liz Yates – Petition regarding street lighting in Beckingham

7. Councillor Martin Wright – Petition requesting a speed reduction on the A6117 Outer Ring Road Mansfield.

RESOLVED: 2011/109

That the petitions be referred to the appropriate Cabinet Members for consideration in accordance with Standing Orders.

(b) REPORT BACK ON PETITIONS

RESOLVED: 2011/110

That the contents and proposed actions in the report back on petitions received on 15th December 2011 be noted and the petitioners be informed accordingly.

6. QUESTIONS

(a) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1

Six questions had been received as follows:-

1. from Councillor Stephen Garner about Ravensdale School site, South Mansfield (Councillor Philip Owen replied)
2. from Councillor Chris Winterton concerning proposed changes to Disability Living Allowance (Councillor Kevin Rostance replied)
3. from Councillor Eric Kerry regarding budget proposals (Councillor Reg Adair replied)
4. from Councillor Jim Creamer about invoices sent in error (Councillor Kevin Rostance replied)
5. from Councillor Alan Rhodes concerning Procurement process appointing KPMG (Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts replied)
6. from Councillor Chris Winterton regarding move-on accommodation services (Councillor Kevin Rostance replied)

The full responses to these questions under Standing Order 7.1 are set out in Appendix B to these Minutes

7. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

(a) CABINET MEMBERS

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts presented the reports with an amendment to paragraphs 28 – 30 of the Leader’s Report as at the last minute she had been unable to attend the Nottingham Post Business Awards and Councillor Chris Barnfather attended in her place. The reports were seconded by the Councillor Martin Suthers OBE.

RESOLVED 2011/111

That the reports from Cabinet Members be noted.

During consideration of these reports, Council adjourned from 12.40 pm until 1.48 pm for lunch.

6(b) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.2

Three questions had been received as follows:-

1. from Councillor Mike Quigley MBE about precept options (Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority replied)
2. from Councillor Jason Zadrozny concerning “Coppers” programme on Channel 4 (Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority replied)
3. from Councillor June Stendall regarding planning obligations (Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority replied)

The full response to these questions under Standing Order 7.2, are set out in Appendix C to these Minutes

7(b) CHAIR OF OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak presented the report. The report was seconded by Councillor Liz Yates.

RESOLVED 2011/112

That the report be noted.

8. DRAFT NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAM WASTE CORE STRATEGY

Councillor Richard Butler introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/113 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mike Quigley MBE.

RESOLVED: 2011/113

1. That the publication of the attached draft Waste Core Strategy be approved followed by a minimum six week statutory public representation period;
2. That it be agreed that any final detailed editing changes can where necessary be made to the attached draft prior to publication;
3. That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability be authorised to agree any detailed changes to the published draft in response to any representations received or other evidence prior to formal submission for examination (Similar approval from the City Council will also be required).
4. That the Submission Draft Waste Core Strategy, along with any recommended detailed changes, be submitted to Government to allow an independent examination to take place.

Councillors Stephen Garner, Geoff Merry, June Stendall, Gail Turner and Martin Wright asked that their votes against this motion be recorded.

After consideration of this item, Council adjourned from 4.20 pm until 4.35 pm.

9. RESIDENTS' PARKING SCHEME

Councillor Richard Jackson introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/114 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ged Clarke.

RESOLVED: 2011/114

1. That the policy for the consideration of provision, modification and removal of residents' parking schemes as set out in the report be approved; and

2. That it be noted that a draft programme would be prepared for the preparation and subsequent delivery of a programme of installation and review of residents' parking schemes.

10. CHANGES TO GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/115 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Martin Suthers OBE.

RESOLVED: 2011/115

1. That detailed proposals on changing the Council's governance arrangements to the committee system be developed.
2. That the public and partners be informed of the intention to return to the committee system.
3. That a further report be brought to County Council following the publication of the appropriate regulations.

11. BETTER VALUE FOR MONEY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION THROUGH STRONGER CORPORATE IDENTITY

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/116 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Martin Suthers OBE.

RESOLVED: 2011/116

1. That the introduction of the Council's Corporate Identity Policy be approved.
2. That the resources required to implement the Corporate Identity Policy be approved.

12. LOCALISM POLICY

Councillor Martin Suthers OBE introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/117 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor John Hemsall.

RESOLVED: 2011/117

That the Localism Policy be approved and that a further report on implementation of the Policy be provided to the appropriate body.

13. USE OF URGENCY POWERS

Councillor Reg Adair introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2011/118 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts.

RESOLVED: 2011/118

That the report be noted.

14. NOTICE OF MOTION

A motion was moved by Councillor Richard Butler and seconded by Councillor Keith Girling in terms of resolution 2011/119 below:-

RESOLVED: 2011/119

“That this Council:-

- a) Notes that under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority can negotiate with and charge developers an amount of money they both agree as sufficient to mitigate the impact of a specific development;
- b) Notes the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regulations, which came into effect in April 2010, giving borough and district councils the option to charge developers for more general infrastructure improvements within that local authority area;
- c) Expresses concern that Local Planning Authorities which opt to establish a Community Infrastructure Levy may prioritise the collection of CIL over the pursuit of Section 106 monies, because CIL is not negotiable and is paid up front;
- d) Expresses concern that CIL regulations provide no mandatory arrangements to ensure that upper tier authorities such as Nottinghamshire County Council receive a share of the levy to fund the development of infrastructure, even if the boroughs and districts collect it for that reason;

e) Resolves to raise these concerns with appropriate ministers, expressing the view that the CIL regulations, which originate from the Planning Act 2008, betray a lack of understanding by successive Governments of the planning process in two-tier local government areas.”

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.01 pm

CHAIRMAN

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APPENDIX A

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2012

3-MINUTE SPEECH

Councillor Stephen Garner

"I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few of the issues currently affecting my constituent.

Firstly, I would like to publicly thank the Chairman and his Lady, for taking the time to visit Asquith Primary School on the 10th January, when the school celebrated their 100th Anniversary. Amongst the ex-pupils who attended the event were 2 friends who were visiting the school for the first time since 1939 and a lady who attended the school in 1932!

The newly refurbished Mansfield Central Library was opened on the same day and what a fantastic facility it now is! I would like to pass on my own thanks for the work that has been put into the facility, which has been very well received by the people of Mansfield.

Recently, an environmental weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes has been applied to Sherwood Hall Road to Carter Lane/Southwell Road. This has been a major improvement, with fewer lorries using the road. Following the success of Lorry Watch Schemes elsewhere in the County, I will be looking into whether this is something that is possible in my area and will be publicising details of how to report lorries using the road via my web page.

I have major concerns about school placements in South Mansfield. All of our schools are full, with no spare capacity. With large developments approved around this part of town, I can only see the problem getting worse in future years. I hope that this Council has the foresight to resolve this problem before it is too late. I have been continually pushing for Section 106 money towards education in my area.

The old Ravensdale School site was given back to the county by Samworth Church Academy as surplus to requirements in August last year. Since then there has been several break ins. These premises would be the perfect solution to the problems we will have in future years and need securing properly. The site might also be a good temporary solution while works are carried out to refurbish our school stock, allowing works to be completed more quickly. The school on site previously accommodated more than 400 pupils, is a strong brick built building and has scope for further expansion, which is something that most of our other school buildings don't have.

As stated previously the school is being vandalised on an almost daily basis and the simple fact is our budgets are ever decreasing. I urge you to look at how we might best protect or re-commission this asset before it is too late to bring this school back in to use.”

APPENDIX B

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2012 **QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1**

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services from Councillor Stephen Garner

"Can the portfolio holder please tell me the intentions of this Council, in regard to the former Ravensdale School site in South Mansfield?"

Response by Councillor Philip Owen, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services:

"The former school has been declared surplus to the requirements of the Children and Young People's Services. Property – Strategy, Compliance and Performance are currently in discussions with Mansfield District Council as to the planning status and development prospects in relation to this site. The site is being considered along with the County Council's other strategic land holdings in Mansfield. We are currently proceeding with the necessary work to ensure the building is demolished as soon as possible due to the ongoing vandalism occurring at the site.

An approach regarding the possible re-use of the school has been made from a free school operator. No discussions have as yet taken place."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health from Councillor Chris Winterton

"The Government's proposed changes to the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was recently debated in the House of Lords. Concerns have been raised that half a million disabled people will be affected by these reforms as it will impose further financial hardship.

Will the proposed Welfare Reforms affecting the Disability Living Allowance result in a financial burden being placed on the Council?"

Response by Councillor Kevin Rostance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

"This is a very technical area of national policy and the response to Councillor Winterton's question reflects this. If following my response, Councillor Winterton would like more detailed information about this specific issue then I would be happy to arrange a separate meeting with myself and officers who deal with these matters on a day-to-day basis.

It is likely that the proposed changes may lead to a reduction in the number of people who will qualify for the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which is set to replace the Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Nottinghamshire County Council, like all other local authorities, is bound by national policy in determining which welfare benefits are taken in to account when assessing the level of contributions made by individuals for the care services that they receive. For example, there will be no financial impact on the Council or service users where they require residential care on a short-term basis as DLA cannot be included in the financial assessment for these individuals. People entering in to long-term care are no longer entitled to DLA after the first four weeks of their stay, except those people that are self funders as they are entitled to retain their DLA.

For people who receive a community-based service, where they are in receipt of DLA, there will be a reduction in the weekly charge that can be levied by the Council, but again, this is in accordance with the national Fairer Contributions policy.

It should be noted that there are no plans to replace DLA with PIP for people over the age of 65 and this does make up the largest proportion of people that receive care services from Nottinghamshire County Council at the present time.”

Question to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property from Councillor Eric Kerry

“At this time last year, the Cabinet Member faced the immense challenge of presenting a programme to save more than £180 million from the Council’s budget over four years whilst protecting frontline services. Opposition groups criticised and voted against the programme, but rejected their opportunity to put forward alternative budget proposals.

Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that if the opposition groups plan to submit budget amendments this year, they must first answer the key question as to how they would have bridged the £180 million funding gap faced by this Council a year ago, not just the £11.5 million of extra pressures that have emerged since?

Would he agree that should they fail to do this, they are either accepting last year’s budget by default or neglecting their duty as opposition members to present a credible alternative Medium Term Financial Strategy?”

Response by Councillor Reg Adair, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property:

“Yes, we did face that challenge last year and we are still facing the challenge to get there, of £184 million over the period 2011 to 2015..

At the same time, we've had a lot of pressures on services to children and young people services and adults social services was increasing, and indeed it still is.

I do not intend to repeat all of the details of our 2011/12 budget in this reply, but suffice to say this Conservative administration put forward a robust set of proposals to address these issues. We took difficult but necessary decisions to reduce our management and administration costs. We introduced new, more corporate ways of working. We were clear about the need to protect and enhance the council's core priority services and the need to change or review other services to fund those priorities. We conducted the most extensive consultation ever undertaken by this authority, listened to the public responses and changed our proposals where it was possible to do so. And we did this without raising council tax, because Nottinghamshire's taxpayers already pay more than their counterparts in any other shire county due to previous Labour administrations.

At last year's budget meeting, opposition groups had their opportunity to propose alternative budgets but failed to do so.

It was their opportunity to say which services were their priority, which areas they would make those savings, what was their alternative to our Improvement Plan, how would they manage the staffing of the council, would they increase council tax - and by how much and what would be their capital programme?

It was a defining moment for this Council and there was plenty of scope for Labour in particular, but the other two parties as well, to table an alternative budget setting out how they would do things differently.

But the fact that they did not should tell the Nottinghamshire taxpayer and voter everything they need to know. There were no easy ways to save £184 million and our opponents didn't fancy tackling the difficult questions.

The savings programme we introduced is now well underway and the additional savings target this year is much more modest – a further £11.5 million needed to continue to support our first class services to vulnerable children and adults.

It would not surprise me at all if the opposition parties come forward with amendments this time, tweaking a policy here and there or proposing an increase council tax like Labour's colleagues in the City.

But Councillor Kerry is right. Their amendments must either accept our original 4-year savings programme or come clean as to how they would do things differently and how they would finance it.

Can I make that clear Chairman to our members. The amendments must accept the original 4 year savings programme or come clean as to how they would do things differently and how they would finance it. They can't jump onto the

platform that we have actually outlined as a plan for this Council over the medium term financial plan, just jump on there and answer you taking all the difficult decisions and we will jump on and tweak your budget plans for the future.”

Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health from Councillor Jim Creamer

“It has been reported that an elderly lady from my division who suffers from dementia received over 50 invoices relating to home-care payments from Nottinghamshire County Council. This caused the 86 year old an unnecessary amount of distress.

Please could the Cabinet Member inform the Council how this mistake was made and what will be put in place in order to ensure that this does not happen again?”

Response by Councillor Kevin Rostance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

“For those people that are unaware, this was on the front page of the Nottingham Post – 59 invoices were sent on one day to this lady, an 85 year old lady.

May I firstly apologise, that’s the first thing I’d like to do on behalf of the Council, for any distress that may have been caused to this lady as a result of receiving a high volume of invoices through the post.

As you may be aware, the Council recently introduced the new Business Management System (BMS) and in doing so, switched to an automated process for sending out invoices.

Unfortunately, we have encountered a technical problem whereby only single sheets of invoices are being processed into envelopes instead of the all the sheets which make up the complete invoice.

We have now identified how this error has occurred and have put in place interim measures to ensure that this situation doesn’t arise again. All invoices are currently being checked manually to ensure that all the relevant pages of a complete invoice are put in to an envelope before being sent out.

In the meantime, staff within the BMS Implementation Team are working to find a technical resolution to this matter. At the present moment we are still trying to resolve it but we are able to ensure that it doesn’t happen again in the meantime.”

Question to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Alan Rhodes

“It was announced in December 2011 that the Council had undertaken a competitive procurement process and appointed a consultant partner KPMG who will help deliver several major transformational projects over the next four years.

Please could the Leader inform the Council as to whether this was an open procurement process and could she please inform the Council of the value of the contract?”

Response by Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts, Leader of the Council:

“The procurement of KPMG as a strategic partner to the Council was undertaken as a “mini competition” against established national framework arrangements for consultancy work. This approach allows the Council to benefit from the fact that national public sector purchasing organisations have already met European tendering requirements and carried out all the necessary due diligence on behalf of users of the framework, whilst also ensuring that we benefit from competition in the appointment of a partner.

All organisations on the approved frameworks were able to compete for this work and it did generate significant interest. Officers followed a rigorous evaluation process to produce a shortlist of three organisations and all chief officers were involved in the selection of KPMG from that shortlist.

The contract arrangements with KPMG are on a call-off basis, whereby we can commission specific pieces of work as and when we require them, using an agreed pricing schedule and without having to go out to competition for each individual assignment. The arrangement does not tie us in exclusively to work with KPMG or commit us to a particular level of spend, but it does allow us to develop a positive and productive working relationship with an organisation, without just giving them a blank cheque.

KPMG’s task is to help us to deliver major work in how this organisation operates and their work will be tightly managed through the established Improvement Programme arrangements – we will not be allowing them to produce lots of reports that sit on shelves for years on end gathering dust.

The initial assignment is time-limited and will cost £185,000. They will be working with senior officers to identify further efficiency opportunities and a range of more long-term strategic options for re-shaping service delivery.”

Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health from Councillor Chris Winterton

“The Framework Homelessness Charity has launched a £30,000 Appeal to step up the fight against rough sleeping in the Mansfield area. Framework, which

opened 15 units of emergency accommodation in Sherwood Street in July 2011, is warning that recent successes are being reversed by a lack of move-on accommodation services. Nearly two-thirds of the centre's residents are ready to move out but can't because the necessary floating support required to continue their rehabilitation is not always available.

Please could the Cabinet Member inform the Chamber what provision this council is making in this area?"

Response by Councillor Kevin Rostance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

"We currently provide funding to the value of approximately £192,000 per annum to Framework Housing Association to provide floating support services to people specifically within Mansfield and Ashfield to help them sustain a tenancy. This funding enables Framework to provide 48 support places for people at any one time.

Since April 2011, 112 people have utilised this service, 65 people have completed a programme of support or moved on from this service. The service is a short-term service and, therefore, the maximum length of support is two years, however many people will require a much shorter period of support than this. Within the last 12 months 138 people have utilised the service.

There is also a longer term floating support service for more vulnerable people which covers the Mansfield area. This is a county-wide service which supports 45 people at any one time. This service is also delivered by Framework Housing Association; the annual contract value is approximately £160,000 per annum.

Since April 2011, 69 people have utilised the service and 23 people have completed a programme of support or moved on from this service across the County.

There is a range of other lower level supported accommodation in the Mansfield area for people who need support in relation to offending or drug and alcohol abuse. Within the area, the following services are also available:

- Solutions North Accommodation - for people with drug and alcohol support needs. There are 25 units covering Mansfield, Ashfield, Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw
- Mansfield Offender accommodation - with a capacity of 25 units providing low level support to offenders
- North Nottinghamshire Offender accommodation. This service has a capacity of 35 units to cover Mansfield, Ashfield, Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw.

We are due to change the current tenancy sustainment service and a tender process has commenced to commission a new homelessness prevention service in its place which is due to start in October 2012. This will include more group support and peer support, which both offer better value for money. Service users who use the existing vulnerable adults' services will be given the opportunity to transfer into this new vulnerable adults' service where they have on-going support needs.

It is important to note that Nottinghamshire County Council continues to be one of the highest funders of Supporting People services within the region.”

APPENDIX C

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2012

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.2

Question to the Chair of Nottinghamshire Police Authority from Councillor Mike Quigley MBE

“Could the Chairman of the Police Authority advise if the Government’s offer of a Council Tax freeze was included in the deliberations for this year’s precept?”

If so, why, unlike other organisations including the Fire Authority, are the public not being consulted on this option in the run up to the budget meeting?”

Response by Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority:

“As Councillor Quigley is aware, Police Authority Members considered a number of different options, including an option based on accepting the government’s “Freeze Grant” at its Business Meeting held on 11th January 2012.

At that meeting most members agreed the Authority should consult on a proposal based on a precept increase of 3.99%, equivalent to an increase of between 8 and 13 pence a week for most council tax payers.

Over the last year, Nottinghamshire Constabulary have had to make significant savings leading to the closure of a number of Police Stations, and a reduction in police officers employed in the City and County Divisions from around 1680, to below 1600.

The budget proposal we’re consulting on will allow the Force to employ an additional 100 police officers and 52 more PCSO’s, over the next three years – effectively reversing this year’s reduction and supporting the Authority’s aim of accelerating the rate at which crime is driven down in the County.

As Tony Melville, the Chief Constable of Gloucestershire, pointed out on the Today programme this morning, accepting the one off “Freeze Grant” would leave a £1.6M hole in their budget every year from 2013/14.

The same is true in Nottinghamshire and would it mean the Force couldn’t employ all the extra police officers and PCSO’s funded by the budget option currently subject to consultation.

Police Authority members, including Councillor Quigley, will have an opportunity to debate the options further at the meeting of the Finance and Business Committee scheduled for 1st February 2012.

Public comments are being sought at a range of public meetings around the county and through the Authorities website and a final decision on next years budget, informed by those comments will be taken by the Police Authority's at its meeting on 22nd February 2012."

Question to the Chair of Nottinghamshire Police Authority from Councillor Jason Zadrozny

"Did the Chairman of the Police Authority, Jon Collins, watch the program "Coppers", aired at 9pm on Monday 9th January on Channel 4? If he did, what is his opinion of the program and its reflection of policing in North Nottinghamshire?"

Response by Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority:

"I did see the episode "Coppers" to which he refers and indeed have seen subsequent episodes too.

I think the programme offers a mixed picture of policing in North Nottinghamshire and indeed across the county.

These kinds of "fly on the wall" programmes by there very nature focus on the most sensational aspects of policing – many hours of filming are condensed into 6 one hour programmes and the aim of the production company is clearly to entertain.

That's why I have consistently suggested that the Force shouldn't get involved in this kind of programme and would have given that advice in this instance had I or the Authority been asked.

In my view the Force is better focused on driving down crime and catching criminals and shouldn't have spent even a minute of any officer's time helping Channel 4 make cheap television programmes.

As for the programmes themselves, I think they have shown several different aspects of policing in Nottinghamshire. They have shown the range of tasks undertaken by officers around the County, they have shown the patience and professionalism of many officers as they have undertaken their duties, but they have also shown what appears to be some officers behaving in ways that falls short of the high standards of behaviour that both the Authority and the Chief Constable expect at all times.

In those instances I'm confident that the issues raised are being properly addressed, and lessons learnt by the Force.

Finally, I hope Councillors will consider the programmes in context. Last year Notts Police saw crime down by almost 15%, and to date, recorded crime is showing a further year on year reduction of over 17%.

Detention rates and public satisfaction are also significantly up, suggesting that while there still remains plenty of room for improvement and I think we'll all agree, Nottinghamshire Constabulary is increasingly effective and I would say, objectively going in the right direction."

Question to the Chair of Nottinghamshire Police Authority from Councillor June Stendall

"Could the Chairman inform me how many times in the past 3 years Nottinghamshire Police have applied for planning obligations, via a Section 106 agreement, from developers in the County?

Where planning obligations have been sought, could the Chairman confirm whether the Police were successful and if so, where these developments were situated?"

Response by Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police Authority:

"The short answer is none so far.

Perhaps to explain a little and let me put this in context, when I say explain a little I had to find out about this myself first so hopefully the answer I am going to give is going to make a degree of sense. But the context of this is that in September 2007 the Police Authority approved a policy document which was entitled "Policing Contributions from Development Schemes". This policy sought to persuade the eight local planning authorities in Nottinghamshire that contributions towards police infrastructure should be included as planning policy within the emerging Local Development Frameworks. So effectively, if we needed police stations, they should be included as part of the Local Development Frameworks as and where they were needed.

Following the documents approval, the policy document was sent to the local planning authorities and a number of meetings have taken place with representatives of those authorities. There have been discussions regarding specific future developments and the possible police infrastructure requirements in respect of those. However, none of those developments have progressed sufficiently for the Section 106 funding to either be required or needed. Indeed, since the Policy was approved, funding reductions for the Police Authority and the Police overall and changes to the Police estate has meant that it is now even less likely that even where there are large new developments, the Authority and the Force will have any expectations for building new police stations.

However, discussions will continue with local planning authorities to identify any proposed new developments which will require additional police infrastructure and where appropriate every effort will be made to persuade planning authorities to require the developer to make a Section 106 payment to the Police where it is needed.”