

Meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

Date Thursday, 16 September 2010 (10.30 am – 3.28 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Thomas A J Pettengell (Chairman) Keith Walker (Vice Chairman)

> Keith Longdon Reg Adair John Allin Rachel Madden Fiona Asbury Geoff Merry Chris Barnfather Mick Murphy Victor Bobo Philip Owen Joyce Bosnjak Carol Pepper Richard Butler Sheila Place Steve Carr Α Darrell Pulk Steve Carroll Mike Quigley MBE Allen Clarke

Mrs Wendy Quigley Ged Clarke Alan Rhodes John Clarke Ken Rigby Kevin Rostance L B Cooper John Cottee Mrs Sue Saddington Michael J Cox Mel Shepherd MBE S Smedley MBE JP Jim Creamer Α Mark Spencer MP Bob Cross

Mrs Kay Cutts June Stendall V H Dobson Andy Stewart

Sybil Fielding Martin Suthers OBE

Stephen Garner Lynn Sykes **David Taylor** Michelle Gent Glynn Gilfoyle Parry Tsimbiridis Keith Girling Gail Turner John M Hempsall Stuart Wallace

Stan Heptinstall MBE Les Ward

Rev. Tom Irvine Gordon Wheeler Richard Jackson **Chris Winterton Brian Wombwell** Rod Kempster Eric Kerry Martin Wright

John Knight Liz Yates Bruce Laughton

Jason Zadrozny

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Alderman Martin Brandon-Bravo OBE

Hon, Alderman Stewart Pattinson

Councillor Jon Collins – Chair of the Police Authority

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

David Pearson (Deputy Chief Executive)

Peter Ware (Chief Executive's Department) Chris Holmes (Chief Executive's Department) Sara Allmond (Chief Executive's Department) Carl Bilbev (Chief Executive's Department) Daniel Roberts (Chief Executive's Department) Daniel Reynafarje (Chief Executive's Department) Marie Lewis (Chief Executive's Department) Martin Done (Chief Executive's Department) Greg Michael (Chief Executive's Department) Paul McKay (Adult Services and Health)

Derek Higton (part) (Children & Young People's Services) Anthony May (Children & Young People's Services)

Tim Malynn (Communities)
Tim Gregory (Corporate Services)
Alan Sumby (Corporate Services)

OPENING PRAYER

Upon the Council convening, prayers were led by the Chairman's Chaplain.

AGENDA ORDER

The Chairman changed the order of the agenda to take the question to the Chair of the Police Authority before questions to Cabinet Members.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: 2010/055

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the County Council held on 22 July 2010 be agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Darrell Pulk (on other County Council business) and Mark Spencer MP.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

(a) The Chairman, on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council, congratulated Cantamus Choir on their recent successes at the 'Heart of Europe' International Choral Competition held in Gelnhausen near Frankfurt. Cantamus came away with 1st prize in the Secular Class and 2nd prize in the Contemporary Class and were awarded with gold diplomas.

Councillor Michelle Gent had recently published her debut novel, titled Deadlier than the Male and had kindly agreed to donate £1 from every copy sold in County Hall, to the Chairman's Charity.

(b) Presentation of Awards

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Carol Pepper on successfully completing the Ladies Driving Challenge, in aid of the Chairman's Charity and raising £240.

(c) Constituency Issues

There were three constituency speeches given at the meeting:-

Councillor Madden spoke about the re-surfacing of pavements in her ward. Councillor Madden had been pleased that some pavements had been re-surfaced recently, but had then found out that these new pavements were to be dug up only a few weeks later for utilities work. She queried the lack of planning and asked that this did not happen again.

Councillor Ward spoke regarding the The Big House, welcoming the decision made by Cabinet on the future of the Big House and applauding the acceptance of the recommendations which took account of the views of the service users, their families and the staff.

Councillor Laughton spoke on behalf of the Headteacher, the Governors, staff and pupils at Lowe's Wong Infant School who wished to give their thanks to the Council for the zebra crossing now installed outside their school.

5. PETITIONS

(a) PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

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

- 1. Councillor John Clarke Petition regarding A612 Burton Road Bus Priority Scheme Public Consultation
- 2. Councillor Keith Longdon Petition regarding traffic calming measures at the crossroads of Lynncroft/Walker Street, Eastwood
- 3. Councillor Richard Jackson Petition regarding obstruction by motor vehicles on the pavement at the end of Allison Gardens, Chilwell
- 4. Councillor Chris Winterton Petition against residents parking scheme in the Dallas Street area of Mansfield
- 5. Councillor Mick Murphy Petition against residents parking scheme in areas of Hucknall
- 6. Councillor Michelle Gent Petition to remove residents parking scheme in Douglas Street, Oxford Street, Regent Street and Pelham Street, Sutton-in-Ashfield
- 7. Councillor John Cottee Petition regarding enforcement of the speed limit on A606 Melton Road at Stanton on the Wolds.
- 8. Councillor Eric Kerry Petition regarding Middle Street Resource Centre, Beeston
- 9. Councillor L B Cooper Petition against residents parking schemes in West Bridgford

RESOLVED: 2010/056

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

(b) REPORT BACK ON PETITIONS

RESOLVED: 2010/057

That the contents and proposed action of the report back on petitions received on 22 July 2010 be noted and the petitioners be informed accordingly.

6. QUESTIONS

(b) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.2

One question had been received for the Chair of the Police Authority from Councillor Chris Winterton about reorganisation of the Police (Councillor Jon Collins, Chair of the Police Authority replied)

The full response to this question under Standing Order 7.2 is set out in Appendix A to these Minutes.

There were no questions to the Chair of the Fire Authority.

(a) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1

Six questions had been received as follows:-

- 1. from Councillor Lynn Sykes about accidents at the New Kingston crossroads (Councillor Richard Jackson replied)
- 2. from Councillor S Smedley concerning free school travel (Councillor Philip Owen replied)
- 3. from Councillor Les Ward regarding cost of provision of domestic dropped kerbs (Councillor Richard Jackson replied)
- 4. from Councillor Bruce Laughton about accidents in the Easthorpe and Church Street area, Southwell (Councillor Richard JAckson replied)
- 5. from Councillor Stuart Wallace concerning The Big House (Councillor Philip Owen replied)
- 6. from Councillor Les Ward regarding sale of used cars on grass verges (Councillor Richard Jackson 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

The Leader presented the reports including the addendum to the Children & Young Peoples Cabinet Member report. The reports were seconded by the Deputy Leader.

Councillor Philip Owen, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People's Services informed Council that Redhill School would not now become an Academy on 1st October 2010. It was hoped that it would be converted on 1st November, or 1st December. It would convert by 1st January 2011 at the latest.

Councillor Andy Stewart read out a statement in Council during his portfolio report informing Members that approximately 2,000 expressions of interest in voluntary redundancies had been received from staff by the deadline of 10th September 2010. The statement also informed Members that if a member of staff was offered voluntary redundancy they would not have to take it. Expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy would be considered before compulsory redundancies with a view to releasing people at an early stage where possible.

RESOLVED 2010/58

That the portfolio reports be noted.

Following item 7a vi Report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Community, Council adjourned from 12.35 pm until 1.35 pm for lunch.

(b) CHAIR OF OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak presented the report. The report was seconded by Councillor Ged Clarke.

RESOLVED 2010/059

That the report be noted.

THE REVISED EQUALITY POLICY

Councillor Andy Stewart introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of

the resolution 2010/060 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Martin Suthers.

RESOLVED: 2010/060

That the Corporate Equality Policy be approved and on-going work to

achieve the Council's vision for equality in Nottinghamshire be

supported.

2. That the responsibility for equality issues be added to the Deputy

Leader's portfolio.

9. POLICY STATEMENT FOR SCHOOLS

Councillor Philip Owen introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the

resolution 2010/061 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Allen Clarke.

RESOLVED: 2010/061

That the Schools Policy as set out in appendix A to the report be adopted as

Council policy.

SURVEILLANCE AND ACCESS TO COMMUNICATIONS DATA - THE

COUNCIL'S USE OF REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS

ACT 2000

Councillor Mick Murphy introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the

resolution 2010/062 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Philip Owen.

RESOLVED: 2010/062

That the policies in relation to covert surveillance and access to

communications data be approved as set out in appendix A to the report.

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11. ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL BY THE CHAIR OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Councillor Les Ward introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2010/063 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Stan Heptinstall MBE.

RESOLVED: 2010/063

That the report be noted.

12. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2010/11

Councillor Andy Stewart introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2010/064 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts.

RESOLVED: 2010/064

That the annual performance report be approved

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 3.28 pm

CHAIRMAN

M 16SEPT10

APPENDIX A

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2010

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.2

Question to the Chairman of Nottinghamshire Police Authority from Councillor Chris Winterton

"I note the recent publicity around the potential Police reorganisation. Both this group and residents in the County are very concerned.

Can the Chair of the Police Authority confirm that all members will be consulted upon any proposed changes to the organisation and its structure, and if so, could he give us a timescale about the intentions of Nottinghamshire Police?"

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

"Spending cuts recently announced by the coalition Government will have a serious impact upon all public sector organisations; the Police Service and Police Authority are not exempt from this.

It is anticipated that Nottinghamshire Police Force will need to find savings of between £45M and £50M in the next three years, from a budget of just over £200M and this will require a massive re-engineering of the services that we provide.

Even though the scale of these savings are very likely to impact upon police officer numbers during the next three years it is imperative that all is done to protect front line services. As a result it is likely that choices will have to be made about collaboration with other organisations, management structures, buildings, back office functions, procurement and the wider policing family.

It makes sense I believe therefore, that the Police Authority consider Police Service proposals to reduce layers of management in relation to the basic command unit (BCU) structure.

The Police Service has said it will work up proposals around a two BCU model to present to the Authority on the 29 September 2010; we also know, however, that there will be more than one option put to that meeting. Central to these discussions will be the need to maintain partnership activity across the County, a need for local leadership and most importantly the need to maintain neighbourhood policing.

After the meeting on 29 September I will write to all partners, including County Council Members, outlining the proposals and asking for feedback on them. The

proposed options and partner feedback will be discussed at the following Police Authority meeting on 27 October 2010 when a final decision will be made on the future of the BCU structure."

APPENDIX B

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2010

QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways from Councillor Lynn Sykes

"Is the Cabinet Member aware that there have been frequent serious accidents at the New Kingston crossroads in my division, the most recent occurring on 20th July 2010?

The danger arises from the combination of traffic travelling at high speed along Gotham Road and the very limited visibility along that road when reaching the crossroads from West Leake Lane. This is the link road from the A453 and is frequently used by lorries going to the Hardstaff depot. There is an illuminated speed notice on the link road, but the danger from speeding traffic along the Gotham Road remains, and turning out of West Leake Lane in any direction is a life-threatening experience.

Would the Cabinet Member therefore give due regard to this hazard and take appropriate action to reduce the speed of traffic at this junction and improve visibility along Gotham Road?"

Response by Councillor Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways:

"Yes I am aware of accidents at the New Kingston crossroads and I can confirm that there is an ongoing accident investigation into those crossroads. This involves detailed consideration of each collision by evaluation of Police reports, site observations and further research. Councillor Sykes' input to the investigation will be very much welcomed by the department and I have already asked the accident investigator who in charge of the investigation to make contact with Councillor Sykes and discuss possible remedial measures as soon as possible."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People's Services from Councillor S Smedley

"When free school travel is introduced in September 2011, some children in the County will be in a position where they still have to pay bus fares to travel to their local catchment school. We may well have the unusual situation where, on the border of the three mile statutory walking radius, where, with two children

attending the same school, one may have free travel, but their friend on the next street has to pay.

As this eventuality is not covered by the review process, has any thought been given to perhaps providing parity for children who live within the statutory walking distance?"

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

"Can I thank Councillor Smedley for this question which allows me the opportunity to remind Members why this innovative travel scheme is to be made available from September 2011.

The purpose of the new discretionary scheme is to open up greater opportunity for parents where children are attending a preferred school rather than their locally designated catchment area school. This scheme will be unique to Nottinghamshire and assists parental choice to an extent unavailable in any other local authority in England. It is the fulfilment of a manifesto pledge by the majority group. The scheme is to be introduced in September 2011 for eligible Year 7 children in Nottinghamshire and will roll out in successive years to each new Year 7 cohort until the end of statutory schooling in Year 11. Of course, we shall monitor closely the implementation of the scheme to ensure that it represents good value for money and that no unintended consequences arise.

The walking distance to school is, as Councillor Smedley says in her question, laid down in statute as three miles for secondary aged children. The new scheme does not replace the existing home to school policy but provides a further benefit where existing services are in operation. It does not seek to address the issue of parents choosing to pay bus fares to save their children walking to school when their homes are within the statutory walking distance of their local school. Where ever reasonable we aim to encourage sustainable means of travel including walking and cycling and so this scheme relates to distances above the statutory walking distance of three miles.

Of course parents are unlikely to wish to send their children on bus journeys to more distant schools if their local school provides a good quality of education. This initiative will serve to create more opportunity for families where previously transport costs have proved to be a barrier in relation to travel to preferred schools and may provide a stimulus for all Nottinghamshire secondary schools to match the standards and progress achieved by the best."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways from Councillor Les Ward

"Could the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways please tell me why the cost of providing a domestic dropped kerb in this county is almost £800 when our

neighbouring county and city councils charge about one third of that cost and could he further tell me why this council does not allow properly regulated, permit holding private companies to carry out this type of work when some of them can carry out work of the same quality, even cheaper still?"

Response by Councillor Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways:

"A review of costs with other Local Authorities shows that our charges are broadly in-line with our neighbours. Derbyshire County Council charge £700 to £1000 on average, Nottingham City £650 to £700 and Leicestershire County Council between £600 and £700. Actual prices do vary depending on the varying amounts of work involved in providing a crossing such as the width of the crossing, the width of the footway, and the material the footway is constructed from.

The Authority has previously considered allowing private companies to carry out this type of work, and the disadvantages with this approach can be that, the applicant then has to pay additional application, processing and inspection fee to the Council. In Nottingham City for example this is £100. There is also a risk of reduced quality of work and an increase in illegal highways works taking place.

In addition to that, it must also be considered that where private contractors are appointed by residents most authorities require that their work is guaranteed for a period of two years. In legal terms, if the contractor then ceases to trade within those two years, the Authority would be able to pursue the resident for any costs to make good defective work. By having the County Council carry out the work residents are safe in the knowledge that they will not have to face any potential costs in the future.

From the County Council's own experience of when residents were permitted to appoint their own contractors, the work carried out by contractors can be unsafe and dangerous and examples of this have included: -

- Damage to utility pipes and to electrical cables that is unreported and 'hidden' so that the contractor avoids paying for the required repair work. The dangers from damaged electricity cables or gas pipes are obvious but there are also potential implications for other residents who have their utility services disrupted when repairs are eventually carried out. It should also be noted that utility companies can legally hold the County Council responsible for all costs that they may incur as a result of damage to their apparatus by private contractors.
- Specifications for materials and their use not being followed manifesting itself in the form of a surface failure some years after the work has been carried out and the contractor has gone out of business for example. Highway authorities are then required to put such work right at public expense and there are issues of road safety and safety to pedestrians and

the potential liabilities that the Authority would then face if a claim was made by one of these.

As a point of interest, if the highway authority carries out the works to construct a dropped crossing then no VAT is required to be paid by the applicant. Of course, if a third party contractor is appointed, the applicant would usually pay VAT on that work.

Given the information gathered and the circumstances described the costs of providing a domestic dropped crossing in Nottinghamshire is actually in line with that charged by other neighbouring authorities. In not allowing residents to use their own contractors the County Council is operating within the legal requirements of the Highways Act 1980 as well as protecting the long term interests, safety and financial liabilities of residents in general as well as applicants."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways from Councillor Bruce Laughton

"Is the Cabinet Member aware that a number of accidents have occurred in the Easthorpe and Church Street area in Southwell?

Only recently, a van demolished a house and a heavy goods vehicle destroyed a set of scaffolding being used by a painter and decorators.

Could the Cabinet Member please look into this spate of accidents and ascertain whether there are any remedial works that can be carried out to alleviate this problem?"

Response by Councillor Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways:

"For clarification, both sections are part of the A612 route through Southwell, with Church Street running from the Saracen's Head Public House eastwards to its junction with Fiskerton Road (approx 750m) after which it becomes Easthorpe until the River Greet bridge (a further 300m).

The Accident Investigation Unit holds records of all road accidents that have been reported to the Police in which injuries or fatalities are involved. I can confirm that the accident records for the two sections of road mentioned are as follows. This is for the period January 2007 to 31 May this year which is the most up to date validated records that we have available.

On Church Street between the Saracen's Head (excluding the mini-roundabout) and Fiskerton Road junction there have been four personal injury accidents reported. All incidents resulted in slight injury, with three occurring in 2007 and one in 2009. One of these accidents involved a bus passenger falling within the

vehicle as it came to a halt, one involved a teenage pedestrian crossing at a refuge stepping backwards into the path of a car, and the third involved a car waiting to turn right into a drive being shunted by a following vehicle. The fourth involved a cyclist who fell whilst being passed by an overtaking car. All four accidents occurred at different locations and there is no discernible pattern or common factor apparent in these accidents.

On Easthorpe, fortunately no injury accidents have been reported for the period mentioned.

In addition, the database of unvalidated accident information has also been searched for any incidents that may have occurred since May 31st 2010 but as yet there are no results yet formally available. This has revealed that in the vicinity three "damage-only" incidents have been reported where no injury was sustained to those involved. Two have involved parked vehicles being struck by passing traffic, with no further details available yet.

The third involved a driver taking evasive action to avoid colliding with a queue of stationary vehicles and in doing so lost control and collided with the garden wall of number 67and 67A Church Street. As yet again there are no other details available.

So whilst there is a relatively low level of reported injury accidents, there is a lack of any common factors or locations, which does make it difficult to plan remedial road safety measures. However, any accident is one too many and I have asked that the Accident Investigation Unit meet with and discuss with Councillor Laughton as the local Member with a view to improving road safety not just in the two road sections mentioned but in Southwell as a whole"

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People's Services from Councillor Stuart Wallace

"On 8th September, Cabinet provisionally agreed to replace The Big House respite care home in Edwinstowe with a new, purpose-built facility on the same site.

Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that this proposal represents a carefully considered and sensible compromise between impracticality of refurbishing the existing building, which was left in a dilapidated condition, and the need to maintain this respite care service in surroundings that feel safe and familiar to service users?

Would the Cabinet Member confirm that the views of the parents of service users and those of our trained staff will be taken into account in the design of the new building?"

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

"Thank you Chairman, and can I thank Councillor Wallace for his question. I know he in particular and also Councillor Mrs Quigley have taken a particular interest in the development of this policy regarding The Big House.

On the 8th September 2010 a meeting of the Cabinet agreed to replace the current Big House respite care home for children with a new purpose built facility on the same site.

Extensive consultation with children, parents and staff, including a meeting between parents and Cabinet Members, clearly showed that the provision of Short Breaks at the Big House in Edwinstowe is a highly valued service. Families felt particularly strongly about the service that they received from the staff at The Big House – the home itself is set in grounds which are much appreciated by the service users.

The current building is listed and despite the best efforts of all who work there, is not fit for the purpose of providing short breaks for disabled young people in the twenty-first century. The cost of refurbishing the building would be extremely expensive and, because of the age, structure and listed status of the building, even if it were refurbished, it would still not meet modern day requirements for a short breaks service.

The proposal that has been agreed therefore represents a carefully considered and sensible way forward, ensuring that this respite care service can continue to be provided in surroundings that feel safe and familiar to service users whilst providing modern facilities which meet the needs of these disabled children and young people.

I can confirm that the views of children and young people who use the service, their parents and carers and our staff will be taken into account in the design of the new building."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways from Councillor Les Ward

"Would the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways agree with me that the increasingly creeping blight of used cars being offered for sale on verges and other open spaces throughout our county by dealers as well as private individuals has become an unacceptable public nuisance, especially where the parking of these vehicles obstructs highways maintenance work, and, as there does not appear to be current legislation to deal with the matter, will he consider the making of a local byelaw to address the problem?"

Response by Councillor Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Planning & Highways:

"The selling of vehicles on the highway by traders is governed by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act and we are working with the District Councils across the County to take action to deal with this. District Councils have the power to take action against any individual doing so under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 [Section 3]; action which they may take in the form of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice, or prosecuting the individual depending on the circumstances. These powers were given to the District Councils by Central Government some time ago in order to enable them to tackle this form of antisocial behaviour.

Where individual vehicles are displayed for sale by private individual's action is also taken where the vehicle is creating a parking contravention or is significantly obstructing the highway. However, these courses of action can often require considerable resource to correctly use the powers available and proportionality is therefore crucial. We also work with the police on this matter when there are shared responsibilities and repeat occurrences of significant obstructions of the highway.

On the subject of whether a byelaw can be made to address these problems, the power to make a byelaw for 'good rule and government and the prevention and suppression of nuisances' stems from Section 235, Local Government Act 1972. However, Councils can only make byelaws under this power when the issue is not already covered by legislation and when it is not possible for them or another authority to take the action under any other provision, which brings me to my final point Chairman.

There is some legislation precisely to point: In relation to businesses parking numerous cars 'for sale' on highways, District Councils have the power to take action against any individual doing so under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 [Section 3].

As can be seen, therefore, it is not within this Council's gift to make a byelaw to regulate such activity whilst the power to do so rests with the District Council.

Nottinghamshire County Council Highway Inspectors, Civil Parking Enforcement officers will continue to deal with vehicles that are causing a significant obstruction or a parking contravention and we will work with District colleagues to ensure a coordinated approach is taken."