

Meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

Date Thursday, 29th March 2012 (10.00 am – 5.15 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Keith Walker (Chairman)

Carol Pepper (Vice Chairman)

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

Martin Wright
Liz Yates

Jason Zadrozny

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Alderman Martin Brandon-Bravo OBE

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mick Burrows	(Chief Executive)
Jayne Francis-Ward	(Assistant Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer)
David Pearson	(Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection)
John Slater	(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 the Chairman's Chaplain.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: 2012/006

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the County Council held on 23rd February 2012 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 Les Ward

Other

- Councillor David Taylor

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Chris Barnfather declared a personal interest in agenda item 9, Nottinghamshire School Admissions Arrangements 2013/14 as he was the Chair of Governors at Joseph Whittaker School.

Councillor Stan Heptinsall MBE declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 – Constituency Speech as LEA governor at the White Hills Park Federation, who his speech was about.

The Chief Executive on behalf of all officers in attendance at the meeting declared they all had a personal interest in agenda item 10, Nottinghamshire County Council's Pay Policy Statement 2012-13, as employees of the Council.

Jayne Francis-Ward, Corporate Director Policy, Planning and Corporate Services, declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6a question 2, and left the meeting during consideration of this question, as she was the officer filling the role referred to in the question.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

(a) CHILWELL AND TON BY-ELECTION RESULT

Councillor Richard Jackson introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2012/007 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Chris Barnfather.

RESOLVED: 2012/007

That the report be noted.

(b) Presentation of Awards

Councillor Kevin Rostance presented an award from Capita Social Care Resourcing in recognition of the excellent work carried out by staff in the Adult Social Care, Health & Public Protection Department under Paul McKay, Service Director for Promoting Independence and Public Protection around Personalisation. The Award was in recognition of the Council's partnership working with Capita Social Care Resourcing to achieve efficiency savings and moving people onto a personal budget. The work of Paul McKay, Service Director and Jane North, Group Manager was particularly acknowledged for driving and leading this work.

Gurdeep Dosanjh, Regional Business Manager at Capita, who nominated the Council for the award attended and presented the award to the Chairman.

(c) Constituency Issues

Set out in Appendix A to these minutes is a full note of the issues discussed by Councillors as follows:-

Councillor Jason Zadrozny – Children’s Social Care Provisions in Ashfield

Councillor Mrs Sue Saddington – Local Minerals Plan Consultation in Farndon and Muskham

Councillor Bruce Laughton – Local Minerals Plan Consultation in Southwell and Caunton

Councillor Gail Turner – Roundabout needed in Underwood

Councillor Rachel Madden – Waste Core Strategy

Councillor Stan Heptinstall MBE – School Bus Service

5. PETITIONS

(a) PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

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

1. Councillor Stephen Garner – Petition regarding parking on Littleworth, Mansfield
2. Councillor Steve Carr – Petition requesting a review of road safety in Beeston North
3. Councillor Steve Carr – Petition requesting parking permits for residents of Cromwell Road in Beeston
4. Councillor Steve Carr - Petition requesting a review on dropped kerbs in Beeston North
5. Councillor Gail Turner – Petition regarding double yellow lines on Main Road, Underwood

RESOLVED: 2012/008

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

(b) REPORT BACK ON PETITIONS

RESOLVED: 2012/009

That the contents and proposed actions in the report back on petitions received on 23rd February 2012 be noted and the petitioners be informed accordingly.

6. QUESTIONS

(a) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Jayne Francis-Ward left the meeting during consideration of question 2 and returned for question 3.

Five questions had been received as follows:-

1. from Councillor Chris Winterton about advice on the Supporting People funding (Councillor Kevin Rostance replied)
2. from Councillor John Knight concerning new Corporate Director salary (Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts replied)
3. from Councillor Chris Winterton regarding BMS billing system (Councillor Reg Adair replied on behalf of Councillor Rostance)
4. from Councillor Kevin Greaves about privatisation of roads and toll roads (Councillor Richard Jackson replied)
5. from Councillor Chris Winterton concerning Care Quality Commissioning Reports (Councillor Kevin Rostance replied)

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

(b) QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.2

There were no questions submitted under Standing Order 7.2.

Following consideration of this item, Council adjourned from 12.25 pm until 1.45 pm for lunch.

7. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

(a) CABINET MEMBERS

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts presented the reports. The reports were seconded by the Councillor Martin Suthers OBE.

RESOLVED 2012/010

That the reports from Cabinet Members be noted.

7(b) CHAIR OF OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

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

RESOLVED 2012/011

That the report be noted.

8. A STRATEGY FOR CLOSING THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE EDUCATIONAL GAPS

Councillor Philip Owen introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2012/012 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Keith Girling.

RESOLVED: 2012/012

1. That the Strategy to Close the Educational Attainment Gaps for vulnerable groups and its associated implementation plan be approved.
2. That an update report be presented to the Children and Young People's Committee by the end of September 2012.

9. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2013/14

An addendum to the report was circulated concerning the proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) for Kingston Park Primary School.

Councillor Philip Owen introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2012/013 below, with an amendment to the PAN for Kingston Park Primary School, changing it from 45, to 30.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lynn Sykes.

RESOLVED: 2012/013

1. That the general admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, including agreed variations as attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
2. That the planned admission numbers (PANs) for 2013-2014 as attached at Appendix 2 to the report, and with the amendment to page 14 of the appendix, that the PAN for Kingston Park Primary School be 30, be approved.
3. That the arrangements to link Heathlands Primary School to the Joseph Whitaker Academy, as detailed in appendix 3 of the report, be approved
4. That the co-ordinated and in-year admission schemes for 2013-2014 and new timelines for 2013-2014, as set out in appendix 4 of the report, be approved.

10. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2012-13

Councillor Andy Stewart introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2012/014 below.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Reg Adair.

RESOLVED: 2012/014

That the Pay Policy Statement, which sets out the Council's existing policies, procedures and terms and conditions of employment for all staff, be approved as per the appendix to the report and be published on the Council's website by 1st April 2012.

11. CHANGES IN GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

An addendum to the report was circulated in relation to the terms of reference of the Early Years and Young People's Sub-Committee.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts introduced the report and moved a motion in terms of the resolution 2012/015 below with amendments to paragraphs 15 and 15.2 of appendix C as circulated.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Martin Suthers OBE.

RESOLVED: 2012/015

1. That the Council adopts a committee system form of governance with effect from the Annual Meeting on 17th May 2012 and ceases to operate the Leader/Cabinet Executive arrangements from that date.
2. That the following parts of the Constitution as set out in Appendix C be approved to operate with effect from the Annual Meeting on 17th May 2012:-

- Introduction
- Terms of Reference of the Council, committees and sub-committees, subject to the following amendment to Appendix C Page 10, paragraphs 15 and 15.2 to read:-

15. EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUB-COMMITTEE –
TERMS OF REFERENCE

15.2 The Sub-Committee is responsible for the following:

Table
Responsibility for Young People's Service
Responsibility for Early Years and the Early Years Intervention Service, including Children's Centres
Responsibility for Young People's Support and Arts Service
Responsibility for the Targeted Support and Youth Justice Service

- Scheme of Delegation to officers
 - Procedure Rules for Full Council meetings
 - Procedure Rules for other meetings
 - Urgency Procedure Rules
3. That the size of the Committees and Sub-Committees and proportionality be as shown in Appendix B of the report.
 4. That the establishment of a health scrutiny committee be agreed in principle and that a further report be brought to Full Council following discussions with District Councils.
 5. That arrangements be made to convene the Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations on Special Responsibility Allowances for Councillors under the new system and that a report on this be brought back to a future meeting.
 6. That the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to make minor changes to the Constitution as a result of any future departmental restructuring.

12. NOTICE OF MOTION

It was moved by Councillor Joyce Bosnjak and seconded by Councillor Alan Rhodes:-

“Paid work is the most important route out of poverty, but a substantial number of workers are still paid wages that are simply not enough to support them or their dependents.

The Council notes that the living wage (which is £7.20 for outside of London) is calculated independently according to the cost of living.

As part of its contribution to the present Nottinghamshire Child Poverty Strategy, the Council will adopt a policy of paying at the least the Living Wage to all its employees, as soon as possible, and will then seek accreditation as a Living Wage Employer from the Living Wage Foundation in order to encourage other employers within the County to do the same.”

The following amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Reg Adair and seconded by Councillor Philip Owen.

“Paid work is the most important route out of poverty, but a ~~substantial~~ number of workers **in the country** are still paid wages that are simply not enough to support them or their dependents.

The Council notes that the **work of the Living Wage Foundation to promote the living wage** (which is £7.20 for outside of London) ~~is calculated~~ **annually by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University.** ~~independently according to the cost of living.~~

In common with many other local authorities the Council currently participates in national pay bargaining where the pay of most of its direct employees, up to and including Service Directors, is determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC).

Within the national pay scale the minimum salary currently paid by Nottinghamshire County Council to its employees is £12,145 per annum, which exceeds the National Minimum Wage level by £448 per annum.

~~As part of its contribution to the present Nottinghamshire Child Poverty Strategy, †The Council will~~ **write to the NJC drawing their attention to the living wage as one of the many issues for consideration.** ~~adopt a policy of paying at the least the Living Wage to all its employees, as soon as possible, and will then seek accreditation as a Living Wage Employer from the Living Wage Foundation in order to encourage other employers within the County to do the same.”~~

Following an adjournment from 4.29pm to 4.39pm, the amendment to the motion was not accepted by the mover of the motion so, following a debate, the amendment to the motion was put to the meeting and carried on a show of hands.

Following a further debate, the motion as amended was put to the meeting and carried on a show of hands.

RESOLVED: 2012/016

That paid work is the most important route out of poverty, but a number of workers in the country are still paid wages that are simply not enough to support them or their dependents.

The Council notes the work of the Living Wage Foundation to promote the living wage (£7.20 outside of London) calculated annually by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University.

In common with many other local authorities the Council currently participates in national pay bargaining where the pay of most of its direct employees, up to and including Service Directors, is determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC).

Within the national pay scale the minimum salary currently paid by Nottinghamshire County Council to its employees is £12,145 per annum, which exceeds the National Minimum Wage level by £448 per annum.

The Council will write to NJC drawing their attention to the living wage as one of the many issues for consideration.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 5.15 pm

CHAIRMAN

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APPENDIX A

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29TH MARCH 2012

3-MINUTE SPEECHES

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

“A few weeks ago a resident came to speak to me about some very serious issues regarding her children and the provision she was being provided with by the social services team in Ashfield. She had incredibly grave concerns, and in my time as a County Councillor, the circumstances she found herself in were perhaps the worst I’d ever experienced. Some incredibly serious and sensitive issues which it would be remiss of me to go into today. They were so severe and so far from my expertise that I really didn’t know what to do so immediately I phoned Anthony May. His office got back to me and we had a conference call later that same day with him and Steve Edwards to discuss the case. I rise today just to speak about what happened then. Within 2 or 3 days I got a local meeting in Sutton-in-Ashfield with the parents and a lady called Ann Chester-Walsh who is a Service Manager in Mansfield and Ashfield. Last week it was 5 years since I became a County Councillor and I largely became a County Councillor because of social care issues. In that 5 years, I’ve never been prouder than I was last week, when I met this lady who’s a Service Manager, of being a County Councillor.

The process was incredibly swift and they dealt with it very, very sensitively. I sat there almost in awe of this lady Ann Chester-Walsh who explained things in a very robust, very fair and very concise manner and dealt with some of the most severe types of social needs that I’ve ever experienced in my division.

I think I just wanted to say, Mr Chairman, that we stand in this chamber often and condemn when things go wrong and point that out. This time something worked incredibly well and I think it’s only right and proper that I take these three minutes to really praise the staff members who did an outstanding job in this case and served my residents above and beyond the need that they had needed to do. Thank you.”

Councillor Mrs Sue Saddington

“Today I am highlighting the problem which has arisen within my Division regarding possible future sites for gravel extraction as current consultation is taking place for the new Local Minerals Plan which will be prepared to commence from 2014.

Within my Division, seven possible sites have been identified around North Muskham, South Muskham, Little Carlton, Bathley, Averham and Kelham. All within a 4 mile radius. The sites which have been identified are for the production of sand and gravel.

Firstly we are informed that 46 million tonnes is required. The average content of each of the seven possible sites is less than five million tonnes. This would mean that all seven sites would be required from 2014 over the next 16 years. This would have the potential of turning the villages into islands. We already have seven gravel extraction ponds, including one very large pond around North and South Muskham. All of which have been subject to gravel extraction in the past. I am concerned that my villages would have to tolerate increased lorry movements.

In 2003 we were advised that something in the order of 150 vehicle movements to each site were necessary per day. They would have to travel on rural roads and country lanes, many without footpaths. We already have gravel extraction just two miles north of North Muskham. I am not against sand and gravel extraction but I do feel that the figure of 46 million tonnes is excessive as the overall apportionment does not reflect likely demand. Economic recovery, I am sure will occur, but construction is unlikely to reach the level it was prior to the current recession.

I am concerned that the noise, dust and vibration from the processing plants and lorry movements would have a huge impact on the villages, not to mention road safety for pedestrians and children walking and cycling to and from school. The Trent Valley landscape would change forever and the effect on the water table regarding flooding must not be underestimated within this area. Wildlife is in abundance and indeed the area is known for its archaeology as it was near to one of the proposed sites where the Roman gold Torc was recently discovered.

I make a request on behalf of the residents I represent that we look to extending the current sites, North and South of the County which are best placed to serve principal markets with the proviso that should demand increase beyond realistic expectations, and we revisit the plan in 5-10 years time and adjust as necessary."

Councillor Bruce Laughton

"My three minute speech is on exactly the same subject as Councillor Saddington. It is on the local minerals plan and I rise to support what Councillor Saddington has got to say and I don't intend to cover that ground again. But I do recognise the need for sand and gravel and that it is an essential part of the growth of this county.

But I would like the cabinet member to look at the 46 million tonnes figure and I think it was set prior to the recession. I think we all know who's responsible for creating that. The last plan operated on mainly extensions and we believe, both myself and Councillor Saddington, that we could look at the extension of some sites that are in extension now to provide for some of the need over the planned period.

My residents and villagers will be seriously affected by traffic movements through them if any of these sites are developed in certain parts of the Newark area. I would appreciate if the Cabinet Member would also take into account that obviously there may well have

to be one or more of these sites looked at very seriously but if they are then the movement of traffic is taken into account.”

Councillor Gail Turner

“I would just like to raise that Underwood, part of my Division, needs a roundabout. We have a junction in Underwood that is very, very dangerous indeed. Where the A608, the B600 and Church Lane all meet, the Church Lane and the A608 approach the B600 at angles of approximately 45 degrees making it extraordinarily difficult to be able to see and to be able to exit either of those roads onto the B600. It’s very, very dangerous and a roundabout is needed.

We also have a place there where people cross the road a lot to be able to go and walk in the Felly Woods. We have an awful lot going on over a very short space so we really need to have the highway inspectors there to come and assess this because I do feel it is dangerous. People of Underwood do want to have this roundabout. They have come to me and they have asked for the roundabout and this has been something that has been on people’s minds for many, many years. As the County Councillor I feel it is my duty to try now to campaign for a roundabout in Underwood to make things a little better there.”

Councillor Rachel Madden

“Just quickly before I start, I would like to support what Councillor Turner has just said. It is a dangerous junction and it needs looking at.

As you all may be aware we are in the middle of a consultation period for the waste core strategy. My residents are particularly interested in this given that the Bentinck sites are wholly in my Division. The good news with us starts with the submission of an application to Nottinghamshire County Council to restore the tip half through the importation of inert material providing an open air facility for Kirkby and Selston.

Following that, we welcome the long-awaited replacement of the current Nottinghamshire waste local plan full of saved items and flawed policies thus removing the dreaded 10.4 that is the allocation of Bentinck Void as a large landfill. But I must admit I am not going to start celebrating just yet until the core strategy is passed by the inspector just in case it’s counting my chickens before they hatch. But I do admit to quietly smiling inside.

The downside to this episode is what appears to be a lack of support by this Council. I realise that it is a countywide document affecting everyone’s division but as soon as we could, Councillor Zadrozny and myself sat down with a senior officer to agree various actions within our own divisions; to ensure that as many people as possible knew about this strategy and could ask questions about the implications to their lives over the next 15-20 years. I even offered to help pay for extra leaflets or drop-in sessions if

necessary. However a few days later, we were informed that only a fifth of the original number of leaflets would be printed and that very few staff would be available for such drop-in sessions.

So we are arranging in our own time to talk to as many residents as we can through community groups producing our own leaflets etc. This strategy is important to our residents. Are others in the county facing a 14 year battle like ours to stop a horrendous dump or similar in their neighbourhood because this Council wouldn't provide support etc during this short period? It does seem a little short-sighted and parsimonious to withhold this support. Please review this policy to ensure that public consultation isn't just a tick box exercise."

Councillor Stan Heptinstall MBE

"This is a plea to Councillor Jackson in his capacity as overseer of bus transport to and from schools.

I am asking this on behalf of a school in my area, the White Hills Park Federation, where I am an LEA governor. (And I hereby declare an interest in that regard) and also on behalf of Councillor Ken Rigby in his capacity as county councillor for the Trowell area.

Councillor Jackson, by way of a delegated decision published on 6 March, you have decided not to replace a commercial bus service that serves a primary feeder school in Trowell. The service will be withdrawn at Easter which is not far away now.

I do understand the reasons for your decision, which is based purely on cost. But this does not take into account the impact on the school, those who currently attend the school from the Trowell area, and those who would like to attend from the end of the school year. Basically, because it will be easier for children to travel into Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire children will end up being taught out of the county.

This also comes at a sensitive time for the school as it begins negotiations that could lead to a change to academy status. The school feels that, given time and more certainty about transport into the future, the provision can be made commercially viable, but that this cannot be achieved immediately.

So Councillor Jackson, my plea to you today is, please give them a little more time to sort this out rather than pulling the plug at this stage."

APPENDIX B

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 29TH MARCH 2012 **QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7.1**

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

“Is the Cabinet Member aware of the Rt Hon Grant Shapps’ (Government Minister of State for Housing and Local Government) advice on the Supporting People funding:

‘There is evidence that for every pound spent through housing support services saves £3 – in reduced costs in homelessness, tenancy failure, crime, health and residential care packages.’

Will the Cabinet Member now re-consider the savage cuts the Council has made to the Supporting People Budget?”

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

“As Members will be aware, the Council is implementing a programme to achieve savings and efficiencies in the range of services provided through Supporting People funding. A large proportion of the savings are being realised through measures such as improved procurement processes and re-tendered contracts and also through negotiations with providers to enable them to reduce their overheads and management costs.

The aim of the savings and efficiencies programme is to target the Supporting People funding to the most vulnerable young people and adults across Nottinghamshire. The savings realised from this programme are contributing to the increased investment of care services both within adults and children’s social care - for adults, this means an additional £5.2m on care for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs and a further £2.7m on care services for older people. This has been in the budget for the current year and is in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Even after the savings and efficiencies have been delivered from the Supporting People programme, Nottinghamshire County Council will still be investing as much, if not more, funding in Supporting People services than our neighbouring local authorities.”

Question to the Leader of the Council and/or Cabinet Member for Personnel and Performance from Councillor John Knight

“A recent delegated decision was made to disestablish the existing post of Improvement Director and redesignate and regrade the post of Assistant Chief Executive as Corporate Director for the Policy, Planning and Corporate Services. The establishment of the post of Corporate Director PPCS will cost an additional £36,045 per year.

County Council workers have endured a pay freeze. Over 1,000 members of staff have been made redundant, with more redundancies on the horizon.

Is this the right time to be awarding a pay rise of over £20,000 to a Corporate Director?”

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

“The departure of the Improvement Director in December 2011 presented the Chief Executive, as the Head of Paid Service, with the opportunity to review this role and that of the Improvement Programme as a whole. As you will be aware, within the Improvement Programme there are a number of complex and longer term change initiatives now well underway - many of which are to deliver the transformation required to create a financially sustainable organisation.

Improvement and transformation in the council now needs to be regarded not as a short term, time-limited exercise but as part of the everyday business within the organisation, as it is with all businesses.

Within this, the Chief Executive has transferred the responsibility for the Improvement Programme with lead responsibility for transformation at a strategic level across the Council to the post of Assistant Chief Executive. This post has been re-designated as Corporate Director to ensure that the programme is delivered at the appropriate level of dedicated senior management input and leadership.

In addition, the post of Corporate Director also has responsibility for the Communications and Marketing services bringing together the management of all Policy, Planning and Corporate Services Department functions.

For clarity and understanding of the magnitude and scale of complexity associated with this post, the Corporate Director now has responsibility for the Improvement Programme, Communication and Marketing, Legal Services (including litigation, corporate & environmental law), Governance, Scrutiny, Members and Civic Services, Planning Services (including development management, monitoring and enforcement, planning policy and conservation), Policy, Performance, Research and Information, Equalities, Complaints and the Office of the Chief Executive, Economic Development, Community Safety, Grant Aid, Community Support and Engagement and Parish and Voluntary Sector Liaison.

The grade of the post of Corporate Director has been independently validated and graded external to Nottinghamshire County Council and the post holder is being paid accordingly.

There are a number of other factors also determining this proposed change. Local government continues to face challenging times and there are significant developments in the political, financial, and operating landscapes faced by the County Council. It is recognised that the Chief Executive needs to be able to focus on strategic leadership of the organisation as well as having greater capacity to plan and influence national policy which affects the council's long term sustainability. This proposal will enable the Chief Executive to be freed from operational management and give more attention to influencing senior government and local stakeholders

As well as significantly strengthening the strategic planning and leadership capacity of the organisation, the changes have also generated significant senior management savings. The deletion of the post of Improvement Director will accrue savings of £143,049 (including £17,000 market factor supplement as well as on costs) in a full financial year. The establishment of the post of Corporate Director Policy, Planning & Corporate Services will cost an additional £36,045 (including on-costs), resulting in overall net savings of £107,004 in a full financial year.

The Senior Leadership Team has already been reduced from 26 to 18 posts, saving £850,000 per annum, and in addition the County Council is on track to save £11.9m in management and supervision posts - a reduction of 220 posts.

To summarise, the new structural arrangements will provide the right level of leadership to deliver the obligations of the whole of the Policy, Planning & Corporate Services Department, including the Improvement Programme, release operational duties from the post of Chief Executive and create capacity for strategic planning, and deliver a significant savings contribution towards becoming financial sustainable.

I trust this answers your questions in full.”

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

“Can the Cabinet Member explain the BMS billing system to the Council, as a number of my constituents have received bills which they say are both confusing and inaccurate?”

Please could the Cabinet Member inform the Chamber of the number of complaints that have been received regarding the BMS billing system and could he remind the Council of the overall cost for the BMS system?”

Response by Councillor Reg Adair, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property on behalf of Councillor Kevin Rostance, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

“To explain the billing process, all departments of the County Council are able to directly input invoices and credit notes into the Business Management System, known as BMS. Adult Care Financial Services invoices and credit notes for residential care and

community services are electronically transferred from the council's care system (known as Abacus) directly into BMS. The narrative on the invoices that are produced is created by the officers raising the invoice, not by the BMS system. These invoices are then sent to a central print area and are dispatched from the mailroom at County Hall to the customer for payment.

Approximately 5,500 invoices are generated by our Adult Care Financial Services each month. There have been 4 complaints regarding the BMS billing system that have been formally raised with the Corporate Complaints team. These relate to multiple page invoices or credit notes. A process has been implemented to remove multiple page invoices or credit notes to ensure that these are dispatched in one envelope.

Chairman, the implementation of BMS has gone well. There have been teething problems as expected with this scale of change, but the main challenges are not due to any failure of the system. Quite the opposite: BMS is highlighting historically inefficient administrative processes and actively preventing their continuation. It is forcing all parts of the organisation to adhere to a corporate, more efficient way of working. This can cause short-term issues while employees adapt, but the benefits will be substantial. The cost of the BMS five year programme stands at £16.04 million, but it will ultimately save the Council an estimated £5 million every year."

Question to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways from Councillor Kevin Greaves

"The Government has made a recent announcement about the possible introduction of new financial models which could see our roads privatised and the introduction of toll roads.

Will the member for Transport and Highways agree with me that this policy will put another heavy burden on our motorists and Nottinghamshire County Council should be the first in the country to say no to the privatisation of our roads and to the introduction of toll roads in the Nottinghamshire region?"

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

"Speaking to the Institution of Civil engineers in London on 19th March, the Prime Minister stated that proposals were being considered to allow companies to build, maintain and operate motorways and trunk roads across England. Under the plans, charges could be introduced on new roads and any current routes that are improved to make way for more traffic.

David Cameron made the sensible point that with state resources at a premium and congestion on our roads continuing to increase; it is right and proper for the Government to examine every possible way of meeting future transport demand.

Innovative ideas and approaches are needed on road policy, such as Nottinghamshire County Council's successful pledge of £20 million which secured the future of the A453.

Regarding toll roads, the Prime Minister made it clear that these were only being considered by transport officials for delivering new, not existing capacity. We have been assured that the A453 and the Elkesley junction improvement on the A1 will be unaffected by any future changes. These, of course, are two vital schemes which Labour failed to fund.

I'm afraid Councillor Greaves' question strikes me as typical of the knee-jerk opportunism that has become a hallmark of Labour in opposition. We do not yet know the detail of what is being proposed regarding toll roads, so it would be inappropriate for me to pass comment on the implications for Nottinghamshire until more information is available.

I should remind members at this point that of course the last Labour Government were certainly not opposed to Toll Roads, look at the M6 toll as an example, it's a well used road that people choose to use and pay for which has eased congestion on the rest of the motorway network.

What I will say is that, whichever way this develops, it is to the credit of the Coalition Government's that they are brave enough to consider and discuss road policy options that might not initially be popular with everyone but may be necessary to meet future transport challenges. This demonstrates political courage and leadership.

In contrast, it is disappointing that before they even know the facts, we see Ed Miliband claiming this is the "wrong thing to do" and Councillor Greaves wanting the Council to say "no" for the Nottinghamshire region. It seems as if Labour can only ever tell us what they would not do, without ever presenting credible alternatives.

Whether we're talking about transport policy or adult social care or child protection or community safety or whatever, as the largest opposition party in this country and this county, it is time Labour MPs and councillors stopped talking in the negative and told the public how they would tackle increasing public demand whilst reducing the national deficit which accumulated on their watch.

I will comment further on the toll road proposals at the appropriate time and Councillor Greaves can rest assured that the interests of Nottinghamshire residents and road users will always be my priority. In the meantime, I congratulate the Coalition Government for its open, constructive and responsible approach to this issue."

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

"Wokingham Borough Council plans to bring back in-house four Care Homes currently run by a private firm following a poor Care Quality Commissioning Report.

What plans have Nottinghamshire County Council got in place to support residents of Private Sector Homes if their Care Home receives a poor Care Quality Commissioning Report?"

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

"I am aware of the situation in Wokingham Borough, but given the safeguards applied by Nottinghamshire County Council I have no cause for concern that residents in this county would be put at risk.

Nottinghamshire County Council is proactive in gathering information relating to the quality of care and support delivered within Independent Sector Care Homes. This is done in a number of ways such as regular information sharing meetings with the Care Quality Commission, Nottingham City Council and Healthcare partners, annual Quality Audits and follow up visits as required, and Quality referral process – where any concerns received from the public, the CQC, from partner organisations, or from staff, are logged and followed up usually with a visit to the care home.

These processes mean that the Council is aware of under-performing services prior to the Care Quality Commission issuing a public report.

A policy, 'Guidance on the management of escalating concerns and suspension and termination of contracts', gives guidance on actions to take, when and by whom.

When underperforming services are identified, the Council works closely with providers to ensure action plans are in place and appropriate training is undertaken. Where serious concerns are identified the Council will closely monitor residents and ensure that they, and their families/carers, are kept fully informed of the situation.

Where concerns identified are so serious that contract termination needs to be considered, all support necessary will be given to a provider in seeking a way forward such as supporting the transfer of the business to another provider."