

## **APPENDIX A**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018 QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

#### **Question to the Chairman of the Nottinghamshire Pensions Fund Committee from Councillor Tom Hollis**

Does the Chairman regret not taking action about repeated warnings over the value of Carillion and its share price? Many public bodies and councils took decisive action based on these warnings. Why didn't Nottinghamshire?

#### **Response from Councillor Eric Kerry, Chairman of the Nottinghamshire Pensions Fund Committee**

As at 15<sup>th</sup> January the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund held 450,000 shares in Carillion, and as at the most recent valuation (30<sup>th</sup> September 2017) these shares were valued at £229,500.

This investment formed part of the Fund that is passively managed rather than actively managed. By that, we mean it was part of £620 million of UK investments that track the market index. As a consequence, since Carillion was a listed company it was inevitable that the Pension Fund would hold shares in this company, in proportion to the total index.

There are benefits from passively managing part of the Fund, not just in terms of reducing management costs, but also as the index increases so too does the Fund valuation. This is simply explained by the fact that the value of the holdings in UK equities managed passively has increased by £22m since September 2017, far exceeding any loss on one investment in Carillion.

Every Member on the Pension Fund Committee should understand that there are risks in holding any form of investment. This is set out in the Funding Strategy Statement and I would ask the Member to read this, as it may help to further understand the investment strategy and how we manage risks to the Fund.

#### **Question to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Errol Henry JP**

Could the Leader please clarify what arrangements this County Council has put in place to ensure that Nottinghamshire's citizens, who may be affected by their government's disgraceful handling of the Windrush immigration issue, are adequately supported to ensure that longstanding members of our communities across Nottinghamshire feel valued?

#### **Response from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE**

All relevant staff in the Registration Service for births, deaths, marriages and other services have been advised of the guidance provided by the General Register Office section of Her Majesty's Passport Office. The guidance makes reference to the

announcement by the Home Secretary regarding a Commonwealth Taskforce set up in the Home Office to help those affected.

If Registration Officers are asked to advise individuals, especially in respect of a lack of documents, they will direct them to the Commonwealth Taskforce on Freephone number on 0800 678 1925. Alternatively, registration staff are aware that the taskforce can be contacted by email at the address [commonwealthtaskforce@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:commonwealthtaskforce@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk), and that further information is available at [www.gov.uk/windrush](http://www.gov.uk/windrush).

This information has also been passed to the Customer Services Centre, for use by advisers dealing with registrations enquires. The Corporate Black and Minority Ethnic Network has also confirmed that it has sent guidance information to its staff membership, and is holding a workshop on 16<sup>th</sup> May where those who are either directly affected or have family that are affected can come and find out more about this issue.

I will give you this written reply, Councillor Henry, because it has the telephone number, email and web address on there and I appreciate it is difficult to write down this information as spoken in the Chamber.

**Question to the Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee from Councillor Tom Hollis**

Following discussion at both Finance and Property and Communities and Place Committee's; can the Chairman confirm to the residents of Ashfield that following my request he will investigate reopening Sutton in Ashfield's Waste Recycling Centre in Huthwaite and bring a report back to the Communities and Place Committee at the earliest opportunity?

**Response from Councillor John Cottee, the Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee**

I can confirm that officers are currently investigating the potential of re-opening the Sutton-in-Ashfield Recycling Centre, and a report on the subject is programmed to be considered at the Communities and Place Committee meeting in July.

**Question to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Alan Rhodes**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> May, a joint statement was issued from the Leader of this administration and Leaders from three other local authorities in the East Midlands declaring that discussions have taken place with a view to forming a combined 'East Midlands' authority. Could the Leader please update all members on the outcomes of this meeting, and indicate whether future meetings have been or will be scheduled? Could she also indicate clearly whether this 'Strategic Alliance' is focussed purely on procuring a bigger share of business revenue, or whether this 'super council' is intending to combine administrative functions or share the provision of services in the future? Could she now provide an approximate timeline along which she anticipates these talks to progress, and update members on her previously stated plans for unitary status for this authority?

## **Response from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE**

The statement published on Nottinghamshire County Council's website on 1<sup>st</sup> May stated, and I quote:

'The Leaders of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire County Councils have agreed to explore a Strategic Alliance that would create a unified voice for the region. This would be a first step in an ambitious journey towards a future devolution deal that could help boost the East Midlands' economy.'

The release continues: 'The next stage in the plans will be to have further detailed talks to see how we can take the Strategic Alliance forward with a view to eventually being able to draw down powers and funding from Government.'

Chairman, the clue is in the words: "explore", "first step", and "plans...to have further detailed talks". These are initial discussions, albeit based on the firm and common belief that we can achieve more if we work together, particularly in the areas of connectivity, trade, investment and growth.

At this stage we have agreed nothing except to further investigate ways we can work collaboratively to grow our economy, build on our strengths and tackle our challenges, working with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Chambers of Commerce as part of the Midlands Engine.

The words 'Combined Authority' and 'Super Council' were not in the statement, for good reason. There is no secret plan to create a body or a mechanism which would usurp the individual sovereignty of the councils involved.

As I stated in January, when this Council is in a position to put forward formal proposals for a unitary authority, a report will be presented to Members setting out the business case and the intended timeline for developing that model. Plans to develop a Strategic Alliance will obviously be linked to and influenced by these plans and the plans of other participating authorities, so the timeline for this will also be clarified in due course.

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

Like all members of this Council, the Ashfield Independents are concerned that in almost every category - crime is rising across Nottinghamshire. In the last year, there has been an 18.4% increase in recorded crime including increases in violent crime, rape and weapon-carrying. Nottinghamshire Police claim this is because of a '...more open and honest crime recording policy.' This is despite a recent Freedom Information Request revealing that 36,000 101 calls were not answered in the last year alone.

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that this Council has little or no chance to scrutinise the current Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), that the Police and Crime Panel are unable to do their job properly and that the PCC, as the person ultimately responsible should come before this Council at the earliest opportunity to explain the rise in crime?

### **Response from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE**

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, councillors are envisaged to play an important role in holding Police and Crime Commissioners to account through the local Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel's role is to scrutinise the Commissioner's decisions and actions and also assist them in carrying out their functions. They have the power to veto PCCs' precepts and nominees for Chief Constable, to summon the PCC to answer questions, and to review the Commissioners' police and crime plans.

In England, all the councils in a Force area have to appoint a member to serve on the local Police and Crime Panel, and in Nottinghamshire County Council's case that nominee is Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan.

Any County Councillor with questions or matters of concern in relation to the performance of the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Police Force in general are welcome to contact Councillor Purdue-Horan and ask him to raise those issues at the next Police and Crime Panel meeting.

I am sure our Police and Crime Panel representative would provide appropriate personal feedback to Members on any issues that were raised with him, although I acknowledge that at present, we do not have a formal report back procedure through a council committee. I would be happy to discuss with Group Leaders whether and how such provision might be introduced.

Clearly from your question, you believe the Police and Crime Panel is unable to do its job. Others may have a different view, but in any case the law provides that Police and Crime Commissioners are answerable to those Panels, and of course the ultimate sanction on any incumbent Commissioner lies with the public, who can vote them out of office directly. This was not the case for the Chairman of the Police Authority previously.

### **Question to the Chairman of Children and Young People's Committee from Councillor David Martin**

Across Nottinghamshire, we are about to see the biggest housing explosion since the Second World War. What plans has the Chairman made to ensure that our education service is fit for purpose?

### **Response from the Vice-Chairman of the Children and Young People's Committee, Councillor Tracey Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Philip Owen.**

Nottinghamshire County Council retains the responsibility to ensure that there is a sufficiency of school places in an increasingly diverse and complex educational landscape. There are now more pupils attending schools which are 'academies' than attending maintained schools. The responsibility around the quality of education rests with the Multi Academy Trusts for academies, and with the County Council in relation to schools which are 'maintained'.

To ensure that there is a sufficiency of school places, this Council works in collaboration with the planning departments and committees of the seven district councils, as well as with existing schools and academy sponsors. We do this in order to clearly understand the housing growth trajectories in the Local Plans and land supply documents, and thereby ensure that school places are available when they are required.

Nottinghamshire County Council proactively arranged a public meeting in January 2017 attended by multi academy sponsors, local planning authorities, housing developers and representatives from the Department for Education. This was to outline the possible timelines around anticipated school requirements arising from housing growth.

As a result of these public meetings, we have already made a recommendation to the Regional Schools Commissioner in respect of the sponsor for the Hucknall, Watnall Road (Rolls Royce) new school expected to open in September 2019 and that is following a formal interview process (known as a presumption process) which was chaired by the Chairman of the Children and Young People's Committee, Councillor Phillip Owen.

We are also replacing Hawthorne Primary School in Bestwood, and 'future proofing' it to allow it to further expand when the housing development in that village takes place.

In the special school sector, when we replace Orchard School, Newark, we will expand its capacity by 50%. These three examples illustrate our preparedness.

The County Council will continue to ensure that there is a sufficiency of school places for every child including residents arising from housing developments. We will continue to seek contributions from developers through Section 106 processes. It is anticipated that in the coming ten years there may be a requirement for at least 10 new schools in the county. However, the exact number will only be determined by actual housing growth.