



Thursday October 7th

Hello again and apologies for the daily email newsletters but there is a great deal going on!

### **The Kimberley brewery site**

I was contacted yesterday (Wednesday) morning by Greene King who asked me to keep the following to myself until they had completed their discussions with tenants in houses connected with the Kimberley Brewery Site.

Greene King have decided to sell the former brewery site at public auction in December and some of the properties will be divided into lots. Most notably the homes will be sold in a separate lot.

Most of the occupants of the houses do not have protected tenancies and are on six month leases. I have already been contacted by one householder who like many other tenants is very concerned about their family's future. I am aware that there has been a lot of talk in the past about how tenants can be protected with speculation about housing associations or co-operative housing schemes buying the homes and letting them back. A lot of talk but no results.

What hasn't been explored is whether the existing tenants can form themselves into a housing association and be part of some scheme to buy the houses as a whole or in part. I have suggested we at least explore this and that work has begun.

The brewery closed almost three years ago and has lain empty ever since becoming a target of vandals and thieves, lying unkempt and a rather depressing sight. It needs to be bought by someone with a vision of a place that will be considerably more than housing development. I will be campaigning for the site to be a mix of homes, business and community facilities. It really could be a very exciting venture bringing much needed jobs back into Kimberley.

### **Stapleford Walk-In Centre**

Nottinghamshire PCT have announced that their "preferred option" is to close the Stapleford Walk-In Centre and move the service to the Accident and Emergency Department at the QMC. Under the last Government Notts PCT had restraints placed on its budget which means they must make savings of £80 million in the next two years. The PCT believe it makes monetary and clinical sense to improve services at the QMC by offering a

walk in centre there rather than continue the service in Stapleford.

It is undoubtedly the case that many people (12,000) use the Stapleford Walk-In Centre; it is highly appreciated and with good reason. However, people are using it rather than going to see their GP with the result that GP's throughout Stapleford have empty appointments. People from Derbyshire use the service in considerable numbers and perhaps understandably, Notts PCT is concerned that they are providing a service to Derbyshire residents which they are not funded to do.

My concern is that many thousands of my constituents believe they are going to lose a highly valued service "on their doorstep" and I will certainly represent their views to the PCT.

I have already contacted GP's in Stapleford for their views and have had a number of emails from users of the walk in service telling me in no uncertain terms that they want it to remain open!

There will be a 100 day consultation period and I will make a submission representing the views of users of the walk-in centre and the towns GP's.

I would be very grateful to hear the views of everyone who uses the Stapleford Walk-In centre. Please email me your comments. I will give an update and more information in my next email newsletter.

### **Boots job losses**

I met with the Chief Executive of the Health and Beauty division of Boots, Alex Gourlay on Wednesday afternoon.

I thought it was a constructive meeting and I was reassured about Boots long term commitment to the Beeston site.

Mr Gourlay explained that the job losses will fall in three main areas.

1. About 250 jobs will go over a three year period as the company replaces its current computer systems. Boots have a number of outdated systems that amongst other failings require a large team of staff to input data by hand. This work will go as new £50-100 million system is installed.
2. Integrating businesses bought by Boots has led to a number of project management type jobs which will be phased out as that integration work is concluded. It is however, anticipated that new similar jobs will be created within Boots as the business develops.
3. Twenty management levels will be reduced to eight cutting 200 people in senior management positions most of whom earn over £100,000 a year. Some of these people will take early retirement or voluntary redundancy.

The loss of so many jobs remains bad news but a significant number of people will continue to be employed by Boots.

We talked about the manufacturing plant at the Beeston site which employs about 2,000 workers and was making a £20million loss three years ago. It is now set to break even this

year and that is largely due to the change in working practises agreed with the workforce and the Unions all of whom should be congratulated on turning round this part of the company.

As for the future Alex Gourlay insisted Boots is committed to Nottingham and Beeston. His biggest problem? The “dreadful” transport links to Nottingham. The hours spent by Boots lorries stuck on the A453; the inadequate train service to London and the threat of the work place parking levy.

These are problems that can and must be solved by politicians. I will resist the logical conclusion that it’s “regrettable” the last Government didn’t sort out the A453 in the thirteen years it was in power and will certainly continue to lobby for the improvements to be given priority.

As for the work place parking levy – if the City Council insist on imposing it, tram or no tram, it will prove to be a tax on jobs. Successful businesses like Boots do not have bottomless pits of money to throw at schemes that bring them no benefit.

If nothing else I hope this week’s job losses at Boots will serve as a wake up call to the City Council that they must make Nottingham a great place to do business.

As ever,

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