

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 4 JULY 2012**STATEMENT BY THE ACTING LEADER**

- As we well know, politics is a tough game, and politicians have to take the rough with the smooth. So let me say at the outset that I thank David Parsons for his service to this Council and for the many achievements during his leadership, the pinnacle of these being Council of the Year 2009- the first County Council to achieve this coveted award. David's decision to step aside was the right and proper thing to do- for the County Council, the Conservative Group, for himself and the people of Leicestershire. His decision to resign enables the County Council to move on.
- Leicestershire County Council remains one of the very best local authorities in the country. The reputation for our services is of high quality, our partnership working – for instance in regard to the Health & Wellbeing, the Troubled Families Agenda, East Midlands Shared Services, I could go on and on - is a model, and our medium term planning the envy of many.
- The County Council is highly regarded because of the commitment of staff and, indeed, of members of all parties. Councillors have a democratic mandate and a responsibility to all their constituents. Without the dedicated work of the County Council's staff, Members would find it impossible to do their jobs. The link between electorate, Member and officer is therefore crucial.
- I am well aware that events in the press and media reported recently have tarnished the County Council's reputation, have strained working relationships, and made all our jobs that bit more difficult. On behalf of the Conservative Group, I want to take this opportunity to apologise to the County Council's staff for the position in which they found themselves. Under my leadership, I want to restore our excellent working relationships and restore the County Council's reputation. I am asking all Members of this Council and its staff to help me in this task.
- In conclusion, let me reiterate David Parsons chose to resign; and as I have said, I believe that was the right thing for him to have done. Let me also say that the Conservative Group acted as quickly as it could following the Standards Hearing.
- I can also give an assurance that the Conservative Group wants to ensure that due process continues to be followed so that all the outstanding complaints and investigations arising from allegations against David Parsons are cleared up, reported and acted on through the proper channels. Together, the Council now needs to move on positively and constructively, recognising the increasingly difficult financial constraints ahead of us in the longer term. I am determined that is what we will do.