



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CULTURE AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Zaman – Chair
Councillor Halford – Vice-Chair

Councillor Dr Barton
Councillor Chauhan
Councillor Haq

Councillor Cassidy
Councillor Dave
Councillor Waddington

In Attendance:

Assistant City Mayor – Councillor Dempster.

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147. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Cutkelvin.

148. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

During the item on heritage Places Funding, National Lottery Heritage Fund – Cllr Haq declared that a plaque was being installed to commemorate his grandfather.

149. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Additionally, in the Work Programme item, the issue was raised with regard to the Burial Strategy about cremation provision in Leicester. This was not reflected in the minutes.

Additionally, the point in the workplan stating: “A Grassland Maintenance

Report was added to the workplan to include areas for sports and recreation.”
Was a copy and paste error.

Further information was requested with regard to buskers and freedom of speech with regard to Public Space Protection Orders.

AGREED:

- 1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission held on 19 June 2025 be amended to reflect the above points.
- 2) That the minutes of the meeting of the Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission held on 19 June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the above amendments.

150. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair provided an update on the informal scrutiny that was held on the Waste Strategy. He noted that members had discussed legislative changes on waste. He particularly noted that members had discussed the importance of staying within the budget and aiming to increase recycling.

He further noted that members had been presented with options, and the preferred option appeared to be to have three bins, one for food, one for recycling and one for food waste, with general waste and recycling collected every other week and food waste every week and residents provided with caddies for food waste. It had further been suggested that exceptions be made for households which could not accommodate a further bin. This informal scrutiny had informed the decision report.

Points raised on waste communications and strategy would be looked at between now and the end of the contract in 2028.

151. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

152. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

153. HERITAGE PLACES FUNDING, NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND - VERBAL UPDATE

The Head of Arts and Museums gave a verbal update on Heritage Places, Funding, National Lottery Heritage Funding.

Key points included:

- £250k of funding had been secured from The National Lottery Heritage Fund's Heritage Places long term funding initiative which runs until 2033.
- This funding was to be used to make heritage more accessible, and as such the project aimed to work with neighbourhoods and other organisations.
- A programme manager had been appointed to oversee this.
- Robust research gathering had been undertaken with the target audience.
- Areas to be addressed in the long-term were being looked at as there was the potential to secure further funding to deliver greater impact.
- It was being considered as to how to explore and share heritage, including 'hidden heritage'.
- It was being looked to develop a small grants scheme with an application process that was fair and transparent, to encourage organisations to become involved. Although there is a limited amount of funding available at this stage, it was hoped that this could scale up for the next stage.
- It was hoped to do more work with heritage across the city.

The Committee were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- An Interim Steering Group had been established, and it was hoped to build on this. The initial funding was for two years, so for now this was an interim group.
- Stories that needed to be heard more would be noted, such as the historical diversity of Leicester in terms of the people living here and how Leicester became so diverse, as well as understanding Commonwealth contributions to the World Wars.
- In terms of the criteria for funding to meet, the small grants scheme would develop a grants process that would be fair and would allow many to apply. It was limited for now but was being looked to scale up in the future. It was being considered how funding would be awarded so as to ensure a diverse range of applications.
- In terms of promoting Leicester as a tourist attraction, particularly as an industrial city close to London, it was noted that the programme did not work in isolation. There was also the Story of Leicester

website and also the wider work of Leicester Arts and Museums to broaden participation and engagement with underserved communities, based on robust evidence and research.

- The NLHF Heritage Places funding would run for an eight-year period to 2033. The Council were currently in Stage 1 of the funding but would apply for more in the future.

AGREED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

154. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER POLICY UPDATE

The Service Manager for Asset Strategy gave a presentation updating the Commission on the amended Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy as outlined in the documents attached to the agenda pack. Including A Guide to Community Asset Transfer.

The Committee were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- Members emphasised the importance of receiving clear and accessible supporting information when considering policy updates.
- A list would be provided to members detailing the buildings and operators of premises that had undergone a transfer.
- The importance of generating community awareness of CAT was noted.
- The Council's position focussed primarily on leasing, rather than disposal of assets.
- Shorter term leases were generally offered to promote compliancy.
- Heads of terms are used in the marketing stage of any CAT process and would be specific to the site being marketed. They set out the key terms of any lease.
- Costs were incurred by the Council due to landlord responsibilities including for Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) in order to let the building.
- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme had provided grant funding for some CAT organisations to deliver energy improvements and other capital improvements that support business viability.
- Members noted the success of asset transfers within the Braunstone and Rowley Fields ward, with officers commended on their community support.
- Members referenced the Locality national membership network

raising questions about the proposed policy updates. It was suggested that benchmarking against other local authorities could be useful, further to the benchmarking already completed by Neighbourhoods Services. Members stating that Locality had identified policies that Locality considered successful.

- A task group was requested by members to consider the implications of the policy updates and proposals.
- The Council remained committed to working in partnership with Ward Councillors and communities.
- The Council provided third party infrastructure support too, which provides assistance to groups during any CAT process.
- Ward Councillors did not have input at the procurement stage.
- The Guide to Community Asset Transfer included a process for determining if Community Organisations were suitable for the Community Asset Transfer Process and also a Process for full application review by Asset Transfer Review Group. It included where Ward Councillors were involved and also the CAT Decision route.
- Members highlighted the importance of community perception concerning policy implementation.
- The CAT policy was highlighted by members as being of key importance to matters pertaining to Community Centres and Libraries.
- Members having undergone CATs within their wards noted that the City Mayor had engaged fully with Ward Councillors. They welcomed the policy updates whilst other members held reservations.
- Legal advice would be sought and would be shared with the commission on whether Ward Councillors could be briefed about new CAT opportunities.
- Length of leases was dependent on the evidence criteria and business case submitted at application. Any lease longer than 7 years was legally classed as a disposal, generally leases were initially of 5 years to enable successful applicants to become established.
- A scoring matrix was inbuilt within the assessment policy to ensure fairness and transparency.

Councillor Barton left during the consideration of this item.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted

- 2) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account.
- 3) For the formation of a scrutiny Task Group, to consider the implications of the policy updates.
- 4) That a list of buildings and operators of premises having undergone CAT would be circulated to the commission.
- 5) For the legal position on ward councillor briefing to be shared to the commission.

155. WORK PROGRAMME

The report on Fly Tipping would come to the next meeting of the Commission.

The upcoming Burial Strategy could include information on Cremation Facilities.

A report on Selective Licensing could be added to the forward plan.

The work programme was noted.

156. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no further items of urgent business, the meeting finished at 19:22.