



Leicester
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Thursday, 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 duly convened for the business hereunder mentioned.

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BUSINESS

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1. **LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 8th July 2021 are available to view at <https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=11003&Ver=4>

Copies are also available from Democratic Support on 0116 454 6350 / committees@leicester.gov.uk

4. **STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR / EXECUTIVE**
5. **PETITIONS**

- Presented by Members of the Public
- Presented by Councillors

6. **QUESTIONS**

- From Members of the Public
- From Councillors

7. **MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**

7 a) Annual Youth Justice Plan

8. **EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

To note any changes to the Executive. To vary the composition and fill any vacancies of any Committee of Council.

9, **REPORT OF REGULATORY COMMITTEES**

9 a) Report of the Audit and Risk Committee to Council covering the municipal years 2019/20 and 2020/21

10. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

PRESENT:

DEEPAK BAJAJ, LORD MAYOR
CHAIRMAN

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

MANJIT KAUR SAINI
VIJAY SINGH RIYAIT

North Evington Ward

LUIS FONSECA
RASHMIKANT JOSHI
VANDEVIJI PANDYA

Aylestone Ward

ADAM CLARKE
NIGEL CARL PORTER

Rushey Mead Ward

PIARA SINGH CLAIR
RITA PATEL
ROSS WILLMOTT

Beaumont Leys Ward

VI DEMPSTER
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

Saffron Ward

ELLY CUTKELVIN
WILLIAM SHELTON

Belgrave Ward

PADMINI CHAMUND
NITA SOLANKI
MAHENDRA VALAND

Spinney Hills Ward

MISBAH BATOOL

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields

SUE BARTON
KULWINDER SINGH JOHAL

Stoneygate Ward

KIRK MASTER
SHARMEN RAHMAN
AMINUR THALUKDAR

Castle Ward

PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK

Thurncourt Ward

STEPHAN GEE

Evington Ward

ELAINE PANTLING

Troon Ward

Eyres Monsell Ward

Westcotes Ward

Fosse Ward

TED CASSIDY
SUE WADDINGTON

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RUMA ALI
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Knighton Ward

MELISSA MARCH
DR LYNN MOORE
GEOFF WHITTLE

Western Ward

LINDSAY BROADWELL
GEORGE COLE

Wycliffe Ward

HANIF AQBANY
MOHAMMED DAWOOD

25. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

By-election – Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

The Lord Mayor made reference to the recent by-election in the Humberstone and Hamilton ward, where Councillor Daniel Crewe was elected. The Lord Mayor formally welcomed Councillor Crewe to the Council. Council welcomed Councillor Crewe with a round of applause.

Citizens from Afghanistan

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent events in Afghanistan, and in particular the impact on its people. The Lord Mayor commented on the long tradition of Leicester being a welcoming place from people all over the world and had again done so by offering both temporary and permanent accommodation for Afghan citizens. Council teams, as well as voluntary, community and faith organisations were working hard to support those individuals and families currently in the city to make them feel welcomed and safe. The Lord Mayor expressed his pride that the city had offered sanctuary to those in need.

The Lord Mayor invited the City Mayor to make a statement regarding citizens from Afghanistan in Leicester.

The City Mayor reiterated the comments made by the Lord Mayor about Leicester welcoming people from all over the world. In terms of the current arrangements in the city, he noted that there was currently a 'bridging hotel', paid for by the Home Office which was hosting temporary residents until a more permanent solution was found. There had been no Home Office officials visiting the hotel, but the Department for Work and Pensions had provided some support. It was however noted that Council staff would now be providing a full support service through its STAR Amal team. The Home Office were funding this full service which meant that staff could begin to undertake needs assessments and co-ordinate the support offered from different groups. This new support would encompass faith and cultural services. Leicester had offered 10 permanent residency places for Afghan citizens which would receive 3 years of Home Office funding. The City Mayor was confident that the new residents would make a positive contribution to the city as had many others who had settled in the city over recent decades.

Civic Events

The Lord Mayor noted that he had attended the following events in recent months, where he was proud to represent the City and they showcased its diversity:

- Festival of Ganesh Chaturthi; this was a Hindu festival which lasted for 10 days and marked the birth of Lord Ganesh.
- A community thank you dinner for Islamic Relief UK to recognise the work of volunteers and supporting businesses.
- Pre-recording the opening ceremony of the Leicester Caribbean Carnival.
- Waving off children to Norfolk on behalf of Leicestershire Children's Holidays charity who provide much needed holidays for deprived children.
- The opening of a new memorial stone at Victoria Park dedicated to far east prisoners of war.
- Attended the Local Royal Air Force Association annual battle of Britain service at St. James the Greater Church.

- Visited the new dog agility course, opened by the charity, Recovery Assistance Dogs, on land provided by the Council which is to the rear of Aylestone Leisure Centre.
- Attended Leicester Curry Awards 2020/21 held at the Athena in Leicester.

Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Lord Mayor reminded all present of the evacuation procedures as detailed on the agenda for the meeting.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any interests they might have in the business on the agenda, not already declared on their register of interests.

There were no declarations.

27. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor and carried:

That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 8 July 2021 having been circulated to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record.

28. STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR/EXECUTIVE

The City Mayor provided a statement on Afghan citizens in the city of Leicester as part of the Lord Mayor's Announcements.

29. PETITIONS

Petitions from members of the public

Ms Poonam Vaghela presented a petition with 314 valid signatures in the following terms:-

The residents of Rushey Mead strongly disagree to make Harrison Road One-Way from Gipsy Lane to St Michael's Avenue. It will increase unnecessary queues, pollution and noise in Stafford Street, St Michael's Avenue, Melton Road and Marfitt Street.

Petitions from Councillors

There were no petitions from Councillors.

Under Council procedure Rule 13a the aforementioned petition was referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.

30. QUESTIONS

The following questions were asked by Members of the Public:

1. Miss Rajul Tejura

"Are there any business cases, pilot studies or examples to justify the

measures being introduced in Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhood Scheme for Rushey Mead?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response noted that despite the responses from the engagement not having been collated at the current time, there had been a number of discussions with a range of people and based on the level and nature of concerns expressed it was not intended to proceed with the scheme in Rushey Mead.

The Deputy City Mayor noted that these sorts of schemes had worked well in other places, ie Waltham Forest, but also in Leicester. The aims of the scheme were to encourage walking and cycling, reducing crime, reduce congestion, stopping rat running, improving public health and reducing accidents. He said that there was evidence to support the view that these types of schemes made streets safer.

There was no supplementary question, but Miss Tejura thanked Councillor Clarke for his response and thanked the City Mayor and Councillor Clair for their support.

2. Miss Rajul Tejura

“Who are the people that have actually designed the Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhood scheme for Rushey Mead, Why was it rushed for implementation to trial with so many flaws?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response stated that officers from the Council’s Transport Strategy Section designed the scheme and Sustrans, a national sustainable transport organisation had provided support. The Deputy City Mayor disagreed with the word ‘rushed’ in the question as he noted that there had been a number of discussions with local Councillors, a roadshow had taken place where residents could speak to officers, a large number of responses to the consultation had been received and he felt amount feedback showed that the proposals were well known about.

3. Mr Nitesh Dave

“Have Rushey Mead residents and the wider community been appropriately informed of the Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhood scheme for Rushey Mead?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response stated that there had been 2000 leaflets distributed, local Members of Parliament were engaged, an experimental Traffic Regulation Order was put in place after the required publicity. He noted that there had been lots of responses to the public consultation, and he felt that there had been a reasonable engagement with the community.

Mr Dave asked a supplementary question, noting that it was good to see a u turn on the project, but queried about the leaflets for the project only being in English and that it was difficult for elderly residents to attend a roadshow?

The Deputy City Mayor responding further felt that he had covered the reach and depth of the consultation in his previous responses.

4. Mr Nitesh Dave

“Have local businesses and organisations been consulted on the Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhood scheme for Rushey Mead and agreed to the impact it would have on them as the measures will unquestionably reduce the footfall in the area and make employees journeys to work in Rushey Mead more difficult and dangerous?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that 15 local businesses had been engaged with in person, 5 were supportive, 8 were neutral and 2 were against.

Mr Dave asked a supplementary question, commenting that the changes would prevent the elderly and disabled from accessing services, Key workers would have problems with access, generally he queried how the scheme would benefit residents?

The Deputy City Mayor responded further noting that the scheme was not now going ahead. He also commented that similar schemes had been developed in Clarendon Park and Highfields, and they generally worked well.

5. Mr Akshay Patel

“What are the goals of the Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhood scheme for Rushey Mead?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that the goals were to enable more walking and cycling, reduce congestion and speeding, and reduce traffic on residential streets as well as environmental benefits.

Mr Patel asked a supplementary question, noting that residents and the elderly would have longer journey times, there would be no parking at junctions, families and the working population would be victims of the scheme and there would be more dangerous roads. He queried how this would reduce pollution and felt that the scheme should support parents dropping children off.

The Deputy City Mayor responded further noting that the comments seemed to be about cars rather than people. He said that he noted other places where this sort of scheme had been introduced had benefited people. Evidence from the experimental scheme showed that reduced traffic had freed up the roads for people who really needed to use them such as the elderly or disabled.

6. Mr Akshay Patel

“Has the council looked at the carbon footprint of traffic in the relevant Rushey Mead area and carried out forecasting for how the Safer Street Healthier Neighbourhoods scheme will impact it and have there been any environmental or traffic impact assessments carried out, if so how did they indicate this scheme would be beneficial and why have the reports not been made available to the public?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that the aims of the scheme included increasing walking and cycling, reducing car journeys to school which would hopefully reduce carbon. He noted that data from other parts of the country showed that similar schemes had reduced pollution. He

appreciated the sensitive nature of these proposals and recognised local concerns. He further said that the challenge was to develop solutions which were right for local communities.

Mr Patel asked a supplementary question, commenting that other areas may not be comparable, ie London had a much better public transport system, he felt this scheme just hindered transport.

The Deputy City Mayor responded further noting that Clarendon Park and Highfields provided local examples, not just London.

The following questions were asked by Councillors:

1. Councillor Dr Moore

“At the last Council meeting, in response to my question as to how the city council can encourage safe and enjoyable firework displays, the Deputy City Mayor informed that efforts were already undertaken to raise awareness to celebrate safely and there was work ongoing with partners such as the Fire and Rescue Service and the Police in this area. He was kind enough to agree that as the fire ‘season’ approached, a high-profile campaign promoting safe use of fireworks with consideration for others could be undertaken; and that he would make sure that officers undertake such a campaign and raise awareness, particularly for those events held on Council land. Could he give some idea as to how that work is progressing and what councillors can do to encourage their constituents to pay regard to the needs of people and animals who can be distressed by the inconsiderate use of fireworks?”

In introducing her question, Councillor Moore noted that Diwali was the festival of light not sound.

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clair in response noted that a campaign was being undertaken for the season of fireworks and festivals which sought ensure that people and animals would be safe. He further noted that the Public Safety Team were undertaking checks on businesses that sold fireworks to ensure relevant legislation was complied with. The team were also looking to promote publicity materials which raised awareness of the impact on animals. The Deputy City Mayor had asked officers to share the leaflets with all Councillors. Further safety information was available from the RSPCA website.

The Deputy City Mayor also noted that the Fire Service were leading on the Celebrate Safely campaign which was being rolled out on social media. They were also looking at engaging with schools.

The Deputy City Mayor said that he was happy to give advice to members on any proactive work that they wished to undertake.

2. Councillor Waddington

“Is Leicester City Council preparing a plan to introduce Selective Licensing in parts of the City with high levels of concentration of private landlords and if so when will this plan be published and open to consultation?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that it was the intention to conduct a formal consultation on this issue with a full report detailing the proposals to the Overview Select Committee in November.

Councillor Waddington asked a supplementary question. She was grateful for the response and asked if a scheme would be implemented in 2022.

The Assistant City Mayor responded further by confirming that a scheme would be introduced through the years 2021 – 2022.

3. Councillor Waddington

“When will Leicester City Council begin consultations upon the extension of an Article 4 Directive in those areas of the City with high concentrations of HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupation) that are not currently covered by Article 4”

The Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clair in response said that the Consultation would start on 15th November 2021.

Councillor Waddington asked a supplementary noting that previous timetables for this consultation had slipped and was there now a firm commitment to starting the consultation in November.

The Deputy City Mayor responded further, commenting that there had been capacity issues across the Council over the past 18 months of the pandemic and the Planning department was no exception. He confirmed the consultation would start on 15th November.

4. Councillor Willmott

“Recently the Council announced it would be introducing measures to control traffic in Rushey Mead, particularly around Gleneagles Avenue and Peebles Way including the introduction of a Bus Gate on Gleneagles Avenue Please would the relevant member of the Executive tell me:

Why there was no prior consultation with ward Cllrs on these proposals?

If this is a consultation exercise will the results be published and discussed with ward Cllrs and local people, before any of it is implemented even as an experiment?

If, as there appears to be significant opposition to some if not all of the proposals, will they be amended following the discussion requested above?”

Councillor Willmott noted the responses provided to previous questions by the Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke and suggested that he move straight to asking a supplementary question. The Lord Mayor confirmed that this was acceptable.

Councillor Willmott asked a supplementary question. He was grateful for the previous responses, but asked why the project wasn't devised and developed through discussions with Ward Councillors?

The Deputy City Mayor, responding further said that the ward councillors had been given a number of opportunities to discuss the project, starting in October

2020, where a presentation was offered but there had been a number of contacts made over the past year, providing information, inviting feedback and outlining consultation events. There had been a range of consultation methods, ie webinar, digital and in person.

5. Councillor Solanki

“We applaud the work the of the LCC Gujarati school that has been operating from the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre over many years. It has provided many children with the ability to further develop the language important to their cultural identity. On behalf of many of these parents in my ward, I ask why has the Council increased the fees from £55 per child to £90, without any gradual increase, any previous notice or without looking at alternate ways to sustain this service. Many low-income families are already struggling with the 5% rise in their council tax, the rise in energy bills, and the potential cut to their universal credits. Can the council give a clear commitment to these parents that they will seek alternative ways to subsidise this cost, not push such high increases down to parents and sustain this language school in our ward.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Master in response noted that these classes were set up some time ago before he was in post. This was the only local authority language class in the city. There was no budget for the provision. There were potential other options for providing the service, but it needed to be self-funding. The Assistant City Mayor committed to no cost increase this year and undertook to ask officers to work with interested parties over the next 12 months to establish a sustainable way of providing the service going forward.

Councillor Solanki asked a supplementary question, noting that the Council ran different services for different communities, but asked that the Assistant City Mayor work with the ward councillors to agree a way forward on this matter.

The Assistant City Mayor gave his assurance that he would work with ward councillors and parents to find the best solution going forward.

6. Councillor Dawood

“How much Section 106 money has been generated for the City, over the last four years”

The Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clair responded by confirming that in the past four years, from April 2017 to April 2021, a total sum of around £12m had been received.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question about whether Community Infrastructure Levy funding could be better distributed across the city as current arrangement were unfair to certain wards.

The Deputy City Mayor responded further noting that the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations were still going through the legislative process. He noted that any money received through the Section 106 process had specific conditions about how and where it could be spent. Those wards where there was little development therefore received little funding. He sympathised but noted this was the system that had to be worked with. The Deputy City Mayor was however happy to work with Councillor Dawood for things he would like to develop in his ward for his constituents.

7. Councillor Dawood

“I welcome the recently launched Knife Crime Strategy. However, with reference to the most recent and senseless loss of life again, what is the City Mayor’s view on the most recent stabbings?”

The City Mayor in response thanked Councillor Dawood for raising the issue and noted that it was sad and very concerning, as knife crime caused major impact on families and communities affected, causing significant pain and distress. The City Mayor commended the work of Councillor Master who had led on the development of a knife crime strategy with the Police which sought to educate and divert those who were tempted to carry a knife. It was further noted as part of the Government’s pledge to address ‘county lines’ gangs, and the ‘complex causes of crime’, a Serious Violence Duty was introduced. This required local authorities to work with the Police and other agencies as part of a long-term prevention strategy. Whilst the Police led on enforcement in this area, there was a clear importance to understand the causes of knife crime and what leads a person to carry knives. The approach was therefore to work together with other agencies and communities to prevent further tragedies from happening in the city.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He noted that there was funding allocated for the next two years and asked whether the funding could be diverted to Youth Services as it was felt that there was lack of provision in this area.

The City Mayor responded further noting that he was happy to look into this issue and would ask Councillor Master to discuss it further with Councillor Dawood. The City Mayor commented that the Council was taking a proactive role in undertaking the diversion activities in relation to the knife crime strategy, which they didn’t strictly need to do. The City Mayor regretted that funding for youth services had been cut as they used to be at the forefront of crime prevention work. The City Mayor also felt that the case should be made to the Police and Crime Commissioner that he continued the work of his predecessor in this area, ensuring suitable resources were made available.

8. Councillor Dawood

“Considering the Tory parties shocking decision of taking away Universal Benefit coupled with the potential rise in energy bills. Could I be advised as to how many people will be impacted by this draconian decision.”

In presenting his question, Councillor Dawood corrected the wording of the question to state that the question should have read; “taking away the £20 uplift’, not “taking away Universal Benefit.”

The Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Master in response stated that he wanted to put on record his disappointment that the government was taking decision a decision such as this, which would directly put people into poverty. He noted that the £20 cut would affect 41,000 households in the city, with some families losing around £1,000 per year. He did however comment that the Council was determined to do what it could to support people affected by the cut.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He noted that as a result of the cut, there could be potentially 100,000 evictions nationally, it would lead to more debt, people going hungry and it was an attack on communities. He asked for an assurance that those affected would receive a more compassionate approach from the Council.

The Assistant City Mayor responded further by confirming that he was very supportive of such an approach, as were his Executive colleagues. He agreed that it would hit families and the city hard and took his responsibilities on this matter very seriously.

9. Councillor Dawood

“Considering the welcomed investment in our sports centre, what is the Deputy Mayors view on investing in our free outdoor play areas, that can be accessed by young people that are from poorer backgrounds.”

The Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clair in response stated there were 183 open space areas in the city. Recent funding for such areas has come from different sources but primarily from Section 106 funding. External funding could also be obtained by working with community groups, as has happened in Knighton Park where over £15,000 was raised through crowd funding, which included a donation from the Hasting insurance company. The Deputy City Mayor also noted that other sources of funding could be from religious organisations, individuals or families. The Deputy City Mayor was happy to ask officers to work with Councillor Dawood to explore funding opportunities for facilities he had in mind for his ward.

Councillor Dawood commented that he was happy to receive assurances that officers would work with him to find solutions. He also noted that different wards had different issues ie deprivation, which meant it was sometimes difficult to arrange funding.

10. Councillor Willmott

“As part of the safer streets scheme it is proposed to introduce a partial one way system on Harrison Road. Please would the relevant cabinet member give an assurance that the views of local people will be taken into account before the proposed one way scheme is introduced? Would they also clarify that the proposed residents parking scheme is not dependent on the introduction of the one way system?”

The Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response confirmed that the decision announced earlier in the meeting (to not continue with the Rushey Mead Healthy Streets, Healthy Neighbourhood scheme) would have no impact on the Harrison Road residents parking scheme.

Councillor Willmott asked a supplementary question about whether objections to the one way scheme on Harrison Road would be taken into account before the scheme was introduced.

The Deputy City Mayor responded further by confirming that they would.

11. Councillor Crewe to say:-

“Given the extra funds the Council has received to spend on vital services, why are my constituents in Netherhall, Humberstone and Hamilton consistently suffering from environmental hazards due to litter and overflowing bins on their streets, parks and communal areas.”

The Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke, in response, firstly welcomed Councillor Crewe to the Council. In terms of the question he noted that there had been some additional funding arising through Covid provision which was used for cleansing of street furniture. He further noted that despite unprecedented cuts, highway cleansing was still undertaken on a weekly basis. The Deputy City Mayor was happy to ask officers, to meet with Councillor Crewe to discuss any specific issues. The Deputy City Mayor was also happy to meet with Councillor Crewe to discuss any issues.

30. ANNUAL YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

Moved by Councillor Master, seconded by Councillor Gee and carried:

That Council:

- a) note the achievements from 2020-21; and
- b) agree the Plan for 2021-22.

31. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

There was no Executive or committees business.

32. REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE TO COUNCIL COVERING THE MUNICIPAL YEARS 2019/20 AND 2020/21

Moved by Councillor Kaur Saini, seconded by Pantling and carried:

That the Report of the Audit and Risk Committee to Council covering the municipal years 2019/20 and 2020/21 be received.

33. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no other business, the Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 6.31pm.