



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Commenced on THURSDAY 15TH JULY 2021 at 5.30pm and Reconvened on
TUESDAY, 27 JULY 2021 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Cassidy - Chair

Councillor Gee
Councillor Kitterick
Councillor Thalukdar
Councillor Porter (15/7)

Councillor Joel
Councillor March (27/7)
Councillor Westley

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21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence on 15th July 2021 were received from Councillor Govind.

The start of the meeting on 15th July 2021 was then delayed due to technical issues that prevented external participants being able to connect into the main meeting at City Hall.

22. SCOPING DOCUMENT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE: UNDERSTANDING THE INCREASING COST OF CARE PACKAGES WITHIN ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGETARY PRESSURES

The Chair proposed and was seconded by Councillor Joshi that the scoping documents for 'Adult Social Care: Understanding the Increasing Cost of Care Packages within Adult Social Care Budgetary Pressures' be accepted

The Chair proposed and was seconded by Councillor Joshi that a second scoping document 'Examining the role and effectiveness of the proposal to establish a central housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team' be accepted.

Due to continuing technical issues, the Chair proposed and was seconded by Councillor Kitterick that the meeting be adjourned to a date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 6.08pm.

23. RECONVENED MEETING

The meeting reconvened on Tuesday 27th July at 5.30pm.

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the reconvened meeting were received from Councillors Govind, Halford and Joshi. Councillor Melissa March, Vice Chair Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission was present as substitute for Councillor Joshi.

The Chair led on introductions from those in person and participating in the meeting online.

Post meeting note: Councillor Porter was absent on 27th July 2021 as he did not receive notification of the date of the reconvened meeting.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair wanted to place on record the Committee's continued thanks for the efforts of all those who were working tirelessly to assist Leicester's recovery in response to the pandemic. The Chair said he was pleased that Leicester was away from the spotlight in terms of the overall level of local cases and that was a huge testament to the local response team. The Chair added he was aware that there was a long way to go in the city's local recovery and was hugely appreciative of the work of all involved and for the continued communication with Members.

The Chair noted the sad loss of people who had died as a result of the pandemic and the families and communities in mourning.

27. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

An amendment was made to the minutes of the last meeting to include Councillor Westley as being in attendance.

AGREED:

1. That the amended minutes of the Overview Select Committee meeting held 27 May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

28. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

A full set of updates on progress had been provided to all Overview Select Committee Members on 14th July 2021 by email.

Councillor Kitterick informed the meeting that he was in discussion with the Deputy Director of Finance with regards to approach taken on applying for court costs and how much it cost to administer that service. The Deputy

Director was in the process of preparing a note for Councillor Kitterick.

The Review of Treasury Management Activities 2020/21 report at the previous meeting had prompted a request from Councillor Kitterick and subsequent response that the return for Travel Lodge at Haymarket Centre was expected to be 2.25% annually. Councillor Kitterick requested information to be provided to him on whether the 2.25% return was before or after inflation.

AGREED:

1. That the Deputy Director of Finance to provide information on the 2.25% return to Councillor Kitterick.

29. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received, in accordance with Council procedures.

30. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received, in accordance with Council procedures.

31. TRACKING OF PETITIONS MONITORING REPORT

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, which provided an update on the current status of responses to petitions against the Council's target of providing a formal response within three months of being referred to the Divisional Director.

A verbal update was provided on the progress of petition 21/04/01 for Green Lane Road, which had been completed since the publication of the agenda.

AGREED:

1. To note the current status of outstanding petitions and to remove those petitions marked 'Petition Process Complete' from the report.

32. COVID-19 UPDATE

The Chair invited Rob Howard, consultant in Public Health (Medicine) to provide a verbal update on the Covid-19 data for the City.

It was reported that:

- Officers were cautiously optimistic, with the rate of infection quite a long way below the national rate of 499 per 100k. The City was at 422 per 100k.
- Infections had gone up in past weeks but not as fast as many other areas. Figures were now coming down alongside national numbers.
- One area of concern was the rate for the 'at risk' group over 60s which was higher than national average.

- The rate in 17-21 years was high, at just over half the national rate.
- School age children were lower than the national rate.
- There was a small increase in the number of people in hospital.
- The city was doing well in terms of statistics for vaccinations. 82% in the Over 50s had had both doses and were fully protected.
- Both doses were needed to protect against the delta variant.
- Only 39% of the overall population (including children) was fully vaccinated. As the country opened up there was still a risk of the virus spreading through the population.
- Numbers were down in Leicester due to a combination of really intense work over the Easter period when the Delta virus was taking over, the theory that there was a high level of natural immunity in Leicester (vaccinated or had had virus). The pattern of infections had changed recently with highest rate of infections now in areas that had lower immunity from earlier infections, such as New Parks.
- In terms of ethnicity the White British population had one of the highest numbers of infection rates, whereas in the past it had been areas of high Asian / Indian / Pakistani communities.
- There was some indication that the recent increase in rates was related to the Euros (being seen nationally) and school holidays. What will soon be seen will be the impact of the opening up of the night time economy, in particular night clubs.
- Overall the city was in a good place, but people needed to be cautious and keep vigilant as to what was going on around them.
- Vaccination needed to continue to be pushed, particularly amongst young people, with testing and contact tracing continuing.

Councillor Kitterick noted the figures for the city centre and West End of the city in terms of vaccination rates was worrying and questioned whether people were not going for vaccinations because of lack of confidence or whether there had been a data cleanse of who was on GP lists at surgeries because they had gone away. The officer responded it was down to a number of factors and that they were actively looking at the situation with CCG colleagues in looking at vaccination figures, such as looking at the number of the younger Chinese population who were largely students and there was a feeling that they had now left the city but were still registered with GP practices in the city and hence the number of vaccinations appeared low. Also those areas when looking at the vaccination numbers overall, there were high levels of younger people who had only recently become eligible and were more vaccine hesitant overall because the impact of the virus on them was not as significant.

It was further noted that the CCG had data that could be broken down by ward, ethnicity and age to provide a very detailed picture on vaccination rates for dose one and dose two on a Middle Super Output level, and information was analysed on a regular basis to get messages out to specific groups where lower levels of uptake were seen.

It was noted that Asian and Black ethnicities were more likely to die with Covid-19 than other communities. Overall White British people had the highest level

of vaccination rates, with the lowest uptake by Eastern Europeans. Data was used to target low uptake of the vaccine in those communities by the CCG who had good engagement with the communities. Work being done had had an impact and officers were seeing rates of vaccination uptake going up. It was important to note that rates in all ethnicities was reasonably good, but just needed to make sure young age groups of all ethnicities were targeted.

The City Mayor stated it was not known, for example with the Polish community, whether a significant number may have returned to Poland. But what was known there were differences between different ethnicities, different age groups in the take up of the vaccination but none were disastrously bad, just that some were better than others. Officers agreed and elaborated the point that when looking at national vaccination levels, there were high levels of hesitancy in Eastern European countries and Poland was one where there were low levels nationally, with social media passing on high levels of Covid-conspiracy theories.

What was pointed out was when looking at the vaccination rates for Covid-19 when compared to flu vaccination rates, it was astonishing how many people had been vaccinated.

The Chair thanked the officer for the positive report, but noted the virus was still around and required people to be cautious and vigilant.

AGREED:

1. That the report be received and its contents noted.

33. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

A verbal update was provided at the meeting on the current position regarding the Local Plan. Fabian DCosta, Team Leader Planning, provided the update. The following information was noted:

- Public consultation commenced on the Draft Plan from September to December 2020, on allocated sites for potential growth and Council policies on areas such as housing, retail and employment. Around 3.5k consultation responses were received which would be responded to.
- The final plan timings were uncertain as there was a need to adjust evidence and plans to address changes made by government.
- Officers were discussing with districts to accommodate unmet housing / employment need, the figures for which had been increased by government.
- The Planning White Paper made fundamental changes to planning guidance and would be addressed in the plan.
- The Class E changes placed retail and offices into one class, which had implications for retail and employment.
- Evidence was being updated on climate change with regards to, for example, future homes.
- The timetable had slipped from Autumn 2021 to February 2022 in terms of a submission plan. There would be a formal plan and consultation.

- The plan would be taken to Scrutiny Commissions then Full Council in January 2023 for approval prior to sending to the Secretary of State, following which it would be examined by the Government Inspector around March 2023 following which any modifications required would be made and a plan hopefully adopted mid-2023.

In response to Members' questions the following points were made:

- It was hoped the final plan would have been ready for Autumn 2021. Since 2018 frustratingly there had been a requirement to adapt to changes in guidance and changes in housing numbers set by Government. A meeting had been held with the Government Office in terms of where the City's plan was in the system. It was noted they were happy with the Council's progress made, even going out to consultation during lockdown. Evidence had been updated to ensure the plan was in the best position to be taken for inspection and it was hoped the plan would be adopted in 2023. The Government had recognised there was a process to follow which would be more streamlined in the future.
- In comparison with other authorities Leicester was one of the first to produce its plan. Charnwood had taken their plan in 2019, and the City would be next to follow. The City would continue to work with the districts to ensure it met its housing need. Information on comparison with other major cities would be provided to Members in writing on the Council position in relation to other authorities.
- In terms of the policies it was safe to use policy when adopted. The authority did have a current core strategy and safe policy in terms of planning applications to determine growth and development in the city. There was a danger in using draft policy until it had been through examination and formally adopted.

The City Mayor shared Members' frustration at the many hurdles put in the way by Government at the speedy adoption of the Local Plan, and was a frustration shared by many local authorities up and down the country. He wanted to make it clear to Government they were hampering the authority in dealing effectively with planning issues before it and to encourage them not to put further hurdles in the way.

- Members recognised the current continuous growth in population in the city and the non-inexhaustible land in which to build. It was asked what was the appetite of other districts to extend the building programme into other areas? It was further noted the key bits of work in parallel with partners in looking at where any unmet need could be redistributed.
- The city's boundaries are tight and identified potential sites had gone out to consultation. Sites were being assessed in terms of being deliverable. Work was being undertaken on a Statement of Common Ground with colleagues in the districts, looking at transport assessments, growth options and where sustainable growth could go. It was hoped there would be an agreement with districts by February 2022 to redistribute any growth that could not be provided within the city boundary and applied to employment as well as housing.

- Growth had mainly increased in the city with growth in districts remaining relatively stable. The work being undertaken on buy-in from other districts through the Members Advisory Group, Planning Officers Forum and Strategic Planning Group mechanisms would work on the way forward. There had been good cooperation so far, and the city had been very transparent with the process to demonstrate what could be accommodated in the city.

The City Mayor informed the meeting that he sat on the Members Advisory Group. He paid tribute to Fabian and his colleagues who had contributed to the Groups and developed a good understanding of the districts and county of the situation. The County were well aware of the pressures on the city and it was misleading to label it as 'our growth' when it concerned both the City and County and would be destructive on the environment in the city and counter-productive if the city became overdeveloped, and in the longer term there would be more pressure on County and the districts.

The Chair welcomed the collaboration with the City Council and surrounding districts and County relationship.

Members recognised the housing crisis throughout the country and that the need for affordable housing was growing fast but would be a balancing act with the need for green spaces and climate change.

It was noted the Local Plan would be taken to Scrutiny Commissions prior to be taken to Full Council in 2023.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report.

AGREED:

1. That the update be noted.

34. ENHANCING WOMEN'S SAFETY

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report to the Committee which outlined the current community safety work around ensuring women's safety, the process used to improve women's safety further within Leicester City and to outline the opportunity to access government funding to undertake proactive community safety work which would make a difference to the daily lives of women and girls. The Committee was recommended to note the current work being undertaken and comment on the proposed way forward.

The report was introduced by Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor, and noted the report was a summary of what Leicester City Council as a local authority did for the safety of women in the city. He asked that the Committee provide their comments on the report and informed the meeting that updates would be provided to the Committee.

The report was presented by Daxa Pancholi, Head of Community Safety and

Protection. Salient points highlighted were:

- For the over a decade a considerable amount of work had been done around sexual and domestic violence, affecting predominantly women, though services were open to both genders.
- At 4.2 in the report the four Leicester City Council domestic and sexual violence and abuse (DSVA) services were outlined, which provided support for children and young people affected by domestic violence, refuge provision, the supporting of perpetrators to change behaviours and helpline provision and outreach work.
- The Team had also recently been successful in gaining more funding of £360,000 for respite rooms for those individual women fleeing domestic violence. The funding would be for one year from October 2021 to September 2022.
- Safer Leicester Partnership had worked with partners such as the two universities and Business Improvement District (BID) around the night time economy to support individuals such as “Ask Angela” where the code words could be used by women who felt unsafe to alert bar staff, and the CityBus placed in the city centre on Jubilee Square where individuals could report crime or receive treatment, and was serviced by St Johns Ambulance Staff and PCSOs.
- Officers were exploring a digital platform to provide people with information on safe ways home, but by being careful not to ghettoise certain areas of the city.
- There had been success in getting Changing Futures funding. £3.5million was applied for and £2.6million was obtained. The funding would be used taking the street lifestyle approach to ensure support mechanisms were in place for people with multiple disadvantages, to VIP fast track people to get the help and support they need.
- The Safer Leicester Partnership 3-year plan was available on the Council’s website. The focus for 2021 was around women’s safety, what types of issues were being faced and in a partnership context identify a set of actions.
- The Safer Streets Fund Round 3 was being specifically focussed around increasing the safety of public spaces of concern for women and girls. £424k out of a total bid of £500k was focussed on the city, for example, in parks extra lighting, CCTV, cutting back shrubbery.
- Demographic data on offenders and victims of sexual offences was regularly provided by the police, and an example was shared on screen and would be shared with Members of the Committee after the meeting. It was noted that women were predominantly the victims and perpetrators were predominantly men.

In response to the report presentation, Members made the following observations:

- A powerful statement had been put out previously by Councillor Rita Patel about the safety of women in the city following the reported death of Sarah Everard. It was felt the tone of the report had watered down the statement

made by the Assistant Mayor. It was further noted that the report should refer to survivors and not victims. There was also a question around consultation with women, particularly those survivors and how they experienced lack of safety in the city and what it felt like for them. It was also felt the report did not cover the persistent under-reporting of crimes, or the preventative action that a woman took daily to keep herself safe that men would not have to consider, therefore the scale of the actual problem was lost.

- There was a gulf between stated aims and what was actually being done that needed to be closed.
- The onus of the measures in the report fell on women to keep themselves safe, where it was male perpetrated violence and a problem with their attitude and misogyny. With regards to under reporting, it was noted only 10% of incidents of abuse were ever reported which reduced lower and lower depending on the severity of the crimes, and whilst what had been created were more ways for women to report issues, the onus was still on women to do so. Changing behaviour was welcomed which would be the seismic change that was needed.

The Officer said it was unfortunate Members had not felt the report had come across as proactive, which it was meant to do. It was stated the partnership effort was being built upon to create something meaningful, to bring all strands of support together. Also, with regards to under reporting, more data had been received from the Police, and conversations had been had around to ensure the hate crime category of misogyny was being captured.

The Deputy City Mayor took on board comments made and noted that under reporting was one of the areas that needed to be worked upon. The meeting was informed there were working groups set up in different parts of the council and agencies to work with young people and family services, safe home services, domestic violence intervention service. Updates on the report would be brought to the Committee on a regular basis. He added that the aspiration was to make women feel safe in parks, the city, pubs and clubs, to make the city a safe place to enjoy with family members.

In response to further comments from Members, further information was provided to the meeting:

- It was further noted that as part of Leicester City Council's domestic violence work, the authority was one of only a few undertaking perpetrator work. It had been found the service was getting a series of victims from the same perpetrator who needed to change their behaviour.
- There was also an opportunity for the city to look at the night-time economy and safety of women. There was an opportunity to bid for some funding towards the end August to support the work.
- There were a number of safe spaces created, such as the bus stations and some of the night clubs where people could go to, to feel safe and was looking to be extended. Security staff in night clubs would also be trained to help spot the signs to help individuals.
- Partners and agencies were working with schools to educate young people.

- The Bystander Programme was information for people on what to do to report issues or assist people there and then to support an individual.
- There were lots of hard infrastructural measures in place or planned, and softer measures to change behaviours.
- With regards to the night-time economy, officers would explore the use of late night buses in the city, which had been used in the past.
- Members asked that more focus be made on what people felt about certain spaces and areas that made them feel intimidated, that the discussion process be led by women specifically how they felt about safety in the city, for spaces to be mapped and for them to lead on works.
- A workshop should be held in every ward to let people know the Council was taking women's safety seriously.

Members asked how the data on domestic violence and sexual abuse across the city had been collated and could it be broken down in terms of ward areas, and a breakdown of the calls from men / women. It was further asked that as the authority was one of the few areas that had a perpetrators programme, how was it impacting on the reporting of domestic violence, and how were the Council utilising the community resources across the city. It was noted there were great community relations across the city. It was asked if the Council and partners were tapping into those resources, skills and connections in different communities to raise awareness of reporting methods, and not just relying on the victim to report issues.

Councillor Russell, Deputy City Mayor (Social Care and Anti-Poverty) suggested it would be useful to bring a whole report on domestic violence and sexual abuse services to the Committee, as the topic deserved a full report and not just an addendum to the programme. The Chair welcomed the suggestion for a full report which would be factored into the Committee's work programme.

The Chair said he felt that one area that was not given enough attention was the education of young people and youth work, and that there needed to be huge focus on working with young people about issues, violence, demeaning women, and the whole attitude problem amongst young people and adults about how they see women.

The Chair added he hoped when the subject was revisited in December 2021, longer term work with young people was a priority for the Safer Leicester Partnership. He looked forward to hearing about practical issues and outcomes, and extended an invitation to women to come and speak at the meeting.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report, everybody involved and Members' comments. He added the Committee would be scrutinising the Police and Crime Commissioner at some stage to ask whether it was a priority.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. Demographic data on offenders and victims of sexual offences would be shared with Members of the Committee.

3. A further report to be brought to the meeting of the Committee in December 2021.

35. LIVING WAGE

The City Barrister and Head of Standards submitted a report which updated the Committee on progress on implementing the Living Wage through procurement for contracts and services not delivered in house by the Council, and the Council's procurement procedures.

The report was introduced by Councillor Myers, Assistant City Mayor (Jobs, Skills, Policy Delivery and Communications). It was noted the wages in Leicester were below the national average, and the motivation for the authority was to have Real Living Wage accreditation, and for the estimated 40k people directly employed by public sector across the city to be paid at least the Real Living Wage.

It was further reported that, as a procurer, progress had been made and that proportionally more contracts secured were compliant. It was a timely report as the authority was in process of reviewing suppliers. The long-term growth strategy in response to the pandemic and economic situation now faced had to be built as much as possible on well paid, sustainable sectors. It was noted there was an emphasis on well paid sectors such as Tech and Science, and to support people to enable them to be employed in those sectors, but also to look at the less well paid sectors such as catering and hospitality to support them to raise wage levels.

The ambition was to enable as many organisations in the city to become accredited as Real Living Wage employers.

The report was presented by Colin Sharpe, Deputy Director of Finance, and the following points were made:

- The Real Living Wage (RLW) was calculated independently by the Living Wage Foundation (LWF) and was currently at £9.50 per hour, 59p above the National Living Wage (the legal minimum wage) at £8.91.
- There was various criteria for employers to become accredited as a Living Wage Employer set out at 3.4 in the report.
- Processes had been implemented to assess whether contracts met criteria for the Real Living Wage prior to them being let for procurement.
- Agency staff engaged by the Council for more than eight weeks were paid at the Real Living Wage level.
- An exemption was negotiated for social care contracts due to affordability implications and pressure on Adult Social Care funding.
- The Council's PFI contracts for waste and schools were let before the Council's Living Wage accreditation. It was thought that most staff employed by the contractors were paid above the National Living Wage, however confirmed data was not to hand.
- Contract monitoring was receiving further work, and audits could be requested with contracts to check Real Living Wage compliance.

The Chair said he was shocked when he read the report that for the most needy of services, proper wages could not be afforded.

Members then provided comment on the report:

- It would cost extra to pay the social care services the Living Wage. It was asked when it was felt it could be achieved, but noted it would require broader discussion.
- It was a valid conclusion to reach that in terms of adult social care contracts, the break down would show the lower value contracts would be paid at Real Living Wage, rather than then larger more complex contracts employing a majority of lower paid staff.
- It was a commitment made by the authority that it would consciously move as many contracts as it possibly could to paying the Real Living Wage.
- For people directly employed by the Council above a certain age, all were receiving Real Living Wage as a minimum, and different tiers, for example, apprenticeships were always higher than the national one.
- With regards to how the apprenticeship offer for looked after children, and how it could be better supported with living costs, a bursary towards living costs was being looked at.
- In terms of the PFI contracts it was presumed when they were renegotiated, the Real Living Wage would be included in new contracts.

The City Mayor agreed with comments made by Members of the Committee, particularly on the social care sector, but in order to pay all contracts the Real Living Wage, there would have to be savage cuts made to other services in the city.

Councillor Russell, Deputy City Mayor (Social Care and Anti-Poverty) said people in society as a whole needed to recognise the cost of social care, and that adding a precept on council tax did not recognise the full cost of social care, and that the social care budget was no longer just for people over a certain age but was more and more being spent on people of working age. She added the national government needed to recognise that a progressive taxation system was needed that would pay for all social care and that people that provided it should be recompensed, should be paid more than the Real Living Wage, and that care should be recognised for the value it really deserved.

The Chair agreed it was a terrible situation people could not be paid the wage they deserved.

Members asked that projections be provided to them on 3.12 in paying the Living Wage to the remaining ten contracts, with a break down preferably by bullet point and then by global figure. It was also asked if feasible or if it already did, that the Council in order to protect its reputation included in its contracts a get out clause that could be used a revocation of those contracts if, for example, an organisation was found to have poor labour practices.

The Deputy Director of Finance responded that the figure of £3.5million for

adult social care contracts had already been mentioned by Members and confirmed figures would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

He added that with regards to the possibility of protection of reputation clause in contracts, he was sure there would be clauses to protect the authority against certain deficiencies in contract delivery, but would be taken back as an action and information provided to Members following the meeting.

The Deputy Director further noted that PFI contracts were very complicated. It was stated that the authority had recently completed the quinquennial benchmarking of the facilities management services at the four PFI schools and that now could be an opportune time to ask questions on the Real Living Wage. It was further noted that Biffa had reportedly been paying its lowest staff on the waste PFI contract somewhere in between the National Living Wage and Real Living Wage.

The Chair noted the actions to be taken back and noted the subject would be revisited as an ongoing situation.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. A further report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
3. Officers to look at the issue of social value to be added to contracts.
4. That a break down of the remaining ten contracts at 3.12 in the report and costs associated with paying the Real Living Wage to them be circulated to Members of the Committee.

36. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR

1. Question from Councillor Cassidy, Chair – Please can you explain the proposals of the Boundary Commission Review and how they will affect our administrative area, and to outline how you intend to respond to these proposals.

Response from the City Mayor:

- The Boundary Commission had made proposals for the new constituency boundaries that were unnecessarily complicated, would cause administrative and practical difficulties.
- What they had proposed was a significant reshuffling of constituencies, and in particular that they would add the Glenfield area to Leicester West.
- As well as being unnecessarily complicated, it was unnecessary as the population of the city was more than adequate to justify having three constituencies within the administrative boundaries, and it made sense to keep them consistent with the parliamentary constituency boundaries.
- It was possible to rebalance the constituencies slightly without needing to look outside for additional electors. It was true Leicester West was on the small side, and Leicester East on the larger side.

- It would be argued to favour alternative proposals to keep the constituencies in keeping with the present city boundaries, minimise disruption between the constituencies, and that they rebalance by looking not at wards in their entirety, but at the polling districts, and a limited number of moves of polling districts between Leicester East and West, and perhaps Leicester South and West, by keeping the majority of polling districts intact.

The Chair and Committee supported the approach outlined by the City Mayor that constituencies should remain in the city council boundaries with minimum disruption to ward boundaries.

The City Mayor would copy the response made to Members, which would include a number of possible options to move polling districts.

2. Question from Councillor Westley – There used to be Bus Users Panel in the authority. Recently there have been more and more complaints regarding bus services from constituents, and the worst thing was to take them out of local authority's control. He asked what accountability was there for the bus services for passengers.

The City Mayor invited Councillor Clarke, Deputy City Mayor (Environment and Transportation) to respond.

- Members were reassured that there was still a Bus Users Panel which during the pandemic had been consulted on remotely. The Council was currently consulting on a Local Transport Plan, and was looking to develop an Enhanced Partnership Scheme through legislation, to draw down significant funding to invest in bus services in the city. What was hoped the Enhanced Partnership Scheme would do would give it more levers to pull with the bus companies. If it didn't there was the opportunity to franchise which was a much more laborious process for a city like Leicester. It was hoped the bus companies would work with the partnership.

37. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme for the Committee was noted.

- The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester had been invited to the next meeting of the Committee. It was then anticipated to invite the new Vice-Chancellor of De Montfort University to the Committee meeting in November 2021.
- A session on Corporate Parenting and the council-wide responsibilities for it would be included on the agenda for the November meeting.
- The Smart Cities agenda item would be moved to the November meeting (from September).
- The Police and Crime Commissioner to be invited to the meeting in September.

38. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Summer Holiday Food Provision

The report provided an update on the progress of the holiday activities and food programme for the year, summarising the delivery over Easter and setting out the arrangements for the summer.

Councillor Russell, Deputy City Mayor presented the report, which built on what had been provided before, to more children, more places, with additional support through Feeding Britain, and also using the Covid Local Support Grant, to particularly work with families including for children with learning and physical disabilities to be able to access the food offer.

The Government had updated its guidance to state that the Holiday Activities and Food Programme funding was only for children that received free school meals during term time which had placed additional pressure on other family budgets, leaving families in significant debt by the end of school holidays. Frustration was felt that the Government should have focussed on food, rather than being tied in with childcare and sending children every day to activity centres. The expansion of provision in the future would also be looked at.

Information on the Easter programme was included in the report, which had included giving out food bags and activities because of Covid.

It was noted that if Ward Councillors had relationships with local schools, they should help broker conversations to get them involved with holiday food provision in all areas of the city. It was further noted that the heat map included in the report showed that the areas in the city with the highest need had in the main some level of provision.

Councillor Russell gave thanks to the team, schools and voluntary sector in the city that had helped to pull the programme together.

Nicola Bassindale, Service Manager, informed the meeting that in terms of numbers, registrations were increasing week on week over the summer as expected. It was reported a lot of children were taken out of school during the last week due to Covid which had an impact on the numbers of children at the start of the school holidays in taking part in activities.

Following Members questions, the following points were made:

- For families having to self-isolate there continued to be the Covid-19 support grant so that any family or individual that needed support, whether for food, utilities or a range of other things, the Covid-19 support email was still in use and continued to supply support through that route.
- Children were regularly divided in school on the basis of whether or not they received school meals, whether it be for trips, etc, and was a system that was not approved of by Members.
- The Council had worked with Feeding Britain to get funding to provide the

- same offer of meals to children during the school holidays.
- Also observed was a number of provisions across the city that had decided to things a bit differently such as the provision at the Women's Hockey Club on St Margaret's Way, run as a holiday club for all children, charging a small amount for those not eligible but free for those on free school meals.
 - Adventure playgrounds were able to offer open access to all children.
 - The opportunity for children not on school meals but families were on tax credit where the childcare component could cover the cost of activities needed to be explored.
 - The Government had put conditions on the funding that 85% of children should be on free school meals.
 - There was not a guarantee that all of the city's children would be fed during the summer. But more children and families than ever would be fed during the school summer holiday. Information had been sent out via schools, and community groups to ensure all parents were made aware. Members were asked that if they knew of any families that required support that they should assist them to get in touch as there were spaces and they would be helped to get booked on.
 - Every possible element had been used to make sure the offer was as accessible as possible, to as many people as possible.
 - With regards to different languages, schools had been the main point of contact and would be aware of the language needs of families.

The Chair thanked the Deputy City Mayor and officer for the report.

AGREED:

1. That the report be noted.

39. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.03pm.