



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY  
SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2022 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Joel (Chair)

Councillor Porter  
Councillor Rae Bhatia

Councillor Sandhu  
Councillor Valand

Councillor Waddington  
Councillor Whittle

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**115. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Joel as Chair of the Commission led on introductions.

The Monitoring officer noted that apologies for absence had been received from The Deputy City mayor for Transport, Clean Air and Climate Emergency.

**116. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Sandhu declared that in relation to the item on the Workplace Parking Levy, he had a business in the city centre but did not provide parking to employees.

Councillor Porter declared that he had an interest in the item on the Lutterworth Road Bus Lane extension and that he had led on a campaign against the Workplace Parking Levy.

**117. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission 12 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **118. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

The Monitoring officer noted that none had been received.

## **119. PETITIONS**

The Monitoring Officer noted that none had been received.

## **120. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER - LUTTERWORTH ROAD BUS LANE EXTENSION**

The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation introduced the item and provided an overview of the report.

It was noted that the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was to extend the existing bus lane following the creation of a new access road, Morcom Drive, from Lutterworth Road that serves the new Franklyn Fields housing estate. This would make it safer for drivers and that following the discussion there would be an option to discuss with the objectors.

As part of the discussion, Councillor Porter suggested that the extension of the existing bus lane would make the current traffic and pollution situation worse and there was no need for the extension. It was noted that this was a proposal and no decision had yet been made. The TRO had come to scrutiny for the Commissions feedback and that Officers would be communicating with the objectors to understand their points.

Councillor Rae Bhatia suggested that the new bus lane on Groby Road should also be revisited. The length of the bus lane needs to be reconsidered as it is causing a bottle neck and traffic was being held up. The bus lane from the junction of Madina Road to the City centre worked well and allowed for buses to flow better to the City Centre, further up Groby Road there were issues which also impacted on the flow of buses. The Director of Planning Development and Transportation noted the concerns raised by Members.

Councillor Waddington queried why the introduction of bus lanes had to be with 24-hour restrictions. The Director for Planning Development and Transportation noted that most bus lanes had 24-hour restriction as there was a need for consistency. A standard approach was taken to all new bus lanes. The extra capacity that would be gained from suspending the bus lanes outside peak hours is not required as general traffic levels are much reduced.

As part of further discussions, the Chair noted that if the scheme would not add value to the existing scheme, then the proposal should be reconsidered or an alternative option be considered. Conversations with local Ward Councillors and the objectors should also be carried out as permanent fixtures would be difficult to reverse.

The Assistant City Mayor for Policy, Delivery, Communications and Levelling Up noted that the 24hr schemes helped move in the right direction if the

Council were to achieve the net zero Climate Emergency target. A modal shift needs to be delivered in a way which is attractive.

AGREED:

That the Director of Planning Development and Transportation be requested to consider the comments made by the Members of the Commission.

## **121. LLEP ANNUAL REPORT**

The Assistant City Mayor for Policy, Delivery, Communications and Levelling Up introduced the item and noted that the LLEP had delivered tremendously although there was an uncertainty on their future as the government had not been clear on defining their role.

The Interim Director delivered a presentation providing the Commission with an overview of the annual report.

As part of the discussions, it was noted that:

- In response to the concern raised with polluting projects, the benefits of the schemes and the use of resources. The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation noted that the government assess all applications submitted on environmental footprints and most schemes are required to be net0
- Materials with the smallest environmental impact are sourced and used and the funding was invested wisely
- Members took the opportunity to congratulate the LLEP for the impressive progress that had been delivered

Members queried what the Freeport would be, how it would operate and what impacts this would have on businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire. The Interim Director for the LLEP noted that the Freeport was a virtual freeport covering a wide area and had flexible boundaries where businesses could opt in. Although, moving slowly, discussions with partners were ongoing with shared visions and objectives and that the LLEP would do its best to represent views of Leicester and Leicestershire businesses. The Assistant City Mayor for Policy, Delivery, Communications and Levelling Up noted that he was not yet supportive of this as there had been no involvement in the governance and what impact it would have on local business.

In response to Members concerns in the increase in NEET, Apprentice dropouts and elder people out of the labour market, it was noted that that it was important to have the right schemes available for people aimed at their needs and understanding the business needs was important to attract the right people for the opportunities available. With real time information available through advisors this helped support interventions put in place.

The Assistant City Mayor for Policy, Delivery, Communications and Levelling up noted that Kickstart schemes cannot be short term and needed to be designed for the long term. It was important to get young people the experience

from a young age and having short term schemes did not provide the experience they needed. With the launch of the Youth Advisory Board and continuous supported schemes managing young people would enable young people to deliver more success.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the Interim Director for the report and queried what information was available on the demographic breakdown of who was benefiting. It was noted that although it was difficult to get the breakdown of demographic data, this had now been commissioned through DMU. Furthermore, as a growth hub, work was ongoing to increase the reach into a diverse background. The success of the Peer Networks programme has been able to get more people involved by encouraging the business community to communicate and facilitating networking.

AGREED:

- 1) That the LLEP be thanked for the report, and
- 2) That the report be noted.

## **122. LEVELLING UP 1/2 UPDATE**

The Director of Planning Development and Transportation and the Director of Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment delivered a presentation providing the Commission with an overview on the Levelling Up 1 and 2 Schemes.

In response to Members concerns about the accessibility and consultation on the proposal, it was noted that, the current configuration of the station had not worked well and the new layout provides the opportunity to improve accessibility with the space being used more effectively. The local accessibility group and other stake holders continue to be consulted and further opportunities for consultation would take place, including as part of the planning process.

The removal of the building on Campbell Street would expose the original structure of the station and this would be a benefit from the heritage perspective. Members of the Commission suggested that any issues should be identified and resolved before submitting the planning application.

In response to Members suggestion of the capacity for taller buildings at Pioneer Park, the Director of Planning Development and Transportation noted that the scale was appropriate for the site and in any case there were limitations on what funding could be bid for.

Members requested that when infilling the underpass at St Margaret's Bus Station as part of the reconstruction of that junction, provision for emergency services be considered. In recent events the fire service used the underpass to feed the hose to allow for traffic to flow on the road above. Additionally, it was suggested that the removal of the traffic lights at the junction on Grafton Street with Burleys Way would allow for a better flow of traffic. The Director for Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment noted that, the improvement of the junction would improve this arrival point into the city and encourage further

developments.

AGREED:

- 1) That the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation and the Director for Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment be requested to consider the comments and suggestions raised by the Commission
- 2) And the both the Directors be thanked for their work.

### **123. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF WORKPLACE PARKING LEVY CONSULTATION**

The Director for Planning, Development and Transportation introduced the report and provided an overview of the findings following the consultation and noted that the consultation had been completed and the decision has been taken not to take the proposal forward.

As part of the discussions Councillor Whittle suggested that the Commission needed to discuss why this scheme had not come to fruition with all the benefits that were available to the city. The Commission Member further noted that it was disappointing that lower charges were not considered as this was a strategic plan for the future and that the cost of living crisis was a temporary issue that would soon pass.

The Assistant City Mayor for Policy, Delivery, Communications and Levelling Up noted that the consultation period was impacted by the cost of living crisis and the current economic situation. There was a need for more local autonomy, an overall improvement to public transport nationally and a hope for better options with a new government in the future.

The Director for Planning Development and Transportation assured the Member that options for varying the cost of each parking space was considered in the business case but noted that not was unlikely that an alternative charge would have changed the 'in principle' responses from the consultation. It was also noted that the information and knowledge gained from the exercise has proved useful in developing transport policy and would potentially support other funding avenues.

Councillor Porter noted that he had spearheaded a campaign against the Workplace Parking Levy and suggested that the proposal only worked if people continued to drive to work with no exemptions for electric vehicles. The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation noted that good cycle and public transport networks are proven to be effective in many other cities including many in Northern Europe and that every opportunity had to be explored to address the climate emergency.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

**124. WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme was noted.

**125. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other items of business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.23pm.