



**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, 24 NOVEMBER 2022 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 meetings of 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 are available to view at the following links:

<https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=12252&Ver=4>

<https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=11949&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
  - Petitions to be debated
6. **QUESTIONS**
  - From Members of the Public
  - From Councillors
7. **MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**
  - a) Draft Local Plan
  - b) District Heating Costs for tenants and Leaseholders

c) Elected Member absence from meetings

**8. REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

a) Bi-Annual report of Standards Committee July 201 – June 2021 – Analysis of cases referred.

**9. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

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

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

**11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

**PRESENT:**

**GEORGE COLE, LORD MAYOR**  
**CHAIRMAN**

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

**Abbey Ward**

MANJIT KAUR SAINI  
VIJAY SINGH RIYAIT

**North Evington Ward**

LUIS FONSECA  
RASHMIKANT JOSHI  
SANJAY MODHWADIA

**Aylestone Ward**

ADAM CLARKE  
NIGEL CARL PORTER

**Rushey Mead Ward**

PIARA SINGH CLAIR  
RITA PATEL  
ROSS WILLMOTT

**Beaumont Leys Ward**

VI DEMPSTER

**Saffron Ward**

ELLY CUTKELVIN

**Belgrave Ward**

PADMINI CHAMUND  
NITA SOLANKI  
MAHENDRA VALAND

**Spinney Hills Ward**

MISBAH BATOOL

**Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields**

SUE BARTON  
ELAINE HALFORD  
KULWINDER SINGH JOHAL

**Stoneygate Ward**

KIRK MASTER  
SHARMEN RAHMAN  
AMINUR THALUKDAR

**Castle Ward**

PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK  
DANNY MYERS

**Thurncourt Ward**

TERESA ALDRED  
STEPHAN GEE

**Evington Ward**

DEEPAK BAJAJ  
SUE HUNTER  
SHAHID KHAN

**Troon Ward**

DIANE CANK

**Eyres Monsell Ward**

ELAINE PANTLING

**Westcotes Ward**

JACKY NANGREAVE  
SARAH RUSSELL

Fosse Ward

TED CASSIDY  
SUE WADDINGTON

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RUMA ALI  
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Knighton Ward

MELLISA MARCH  
DR LYNN MOORE  
GEOFF WHITTLE

Western Ward

GARY O'DONNELL

Wycliffe Ward

HANIF AQBANY  
MOHAMMED DAWOOD

#### **44. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### By-election – North Evington Ward

The Lord Mayor made reference to the recent by election in the North Evington ward where Councillor Sanjay Modhwadia was elected. The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Deepak Bajaj to formally welcome Councillor Modhwadia to Council which he duly did. Councillor Bajaj congratulated him on his recent victory and said that he would work hard for the residents of the ward. Council then welcomed Councillor Modhwadia with a round of applause.

##### Civic Team

The Lord Mayor informed Council that he wished to thank the Council's Civic Team for their support provided to him as he undertook his role. He acknowledged that he had some nerves when he started in the role, but the team had been immensely helpful in helping him through the process, and he welcomed the support provided to him by the team.

##### Western Ward

The Lord Mayor noted that as he had been busy with his Civic duties he had not been able to devote much time on his ward Councillor duties. He paid tribute to Councillor Gary O'Donnell for stepping in to take on the role of maintaining an effective ward Councillor representation in the ward.

##### Visits

The Lord Mayor referred to the visits which he had been on around the city as part of his role. He welcomed the opportunity to find out more about the city, things that people did and how volunteers stepped in to help people.

The Lord Mayor particularly referred to a visit to Inglehurst Junior School as part of Black History Month, where he was embarrassed to see his picture on the wall as a person of achievement. He felt the atmosphere of the school was inspiring.

The Lord Mayor also noted that he had a fascinating visit to the Mason's Lodge on London Road.

The Lord Mayor also attended an International Men's Day event where details were provided about how men could be supported to keep their family together.

##### City of Leicester

The Lord Mayor spoke of how special he felt when going around the city to meet people. It really made him recognise what a great place the city was and how lucky he was to live in such a city.

##### Charities

The Lord Mayor reminded Council of his chosen charity, Sickle Cell Society. He was also looking to promote issues around Prostate Cancer. He noted that there were a number of events coming up to support these charities and he urged Members to attend them.

#### **45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any interests they might have in the business to be discussed.

There were no declarations.

#### **46. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

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

That the minutes of meetings of Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022, copies having been circulated to each member of the Council, be taken as read and that they each be approved as a correct record.

#### **47. STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR/EXECUTIVE**

There were no statements.

#### **48. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

#### **49. QUESTIONS**

##### **1. Councillor Dr Moore:-**

“Can the Deputy City Mayor describe actions taken by the Council over the recent fireworks season to persuade people to show more consideration to their neighbours by choosing pretty but quiet fireworks?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair in response stated firework safety was an annual issue that was a matter of interest to the Council as the Police, Fire services, Ambulance, RSPCA and other animal welfare organisations. The Council had limited legal powers to control the use of fireworks in private gardens, but could control their sale and use in public displays regarding maximum noise level. The Council would continue to work with partners to encourage the safe and responsible use of fireworks.

The Deputy City Mayor thanked Councillor Dr Moore for her question as it alerted him about fireworks issues and assisted with the development of a campaign about their safe use. Minimal complaints had been received compared to the previous year. It was always the intention to promote residents being safe.

Councillor Dr Moore asked a supplementary question. Based on her personal experience, Councillor Dr Moore noted particular noise issues, and three particularly loud bangs this past firework season. She asked the Council to consider having discussions with the Police about fireworks and introducing a whistleblowing phoneline. She noted that loud bangs were damaging to people with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health issues.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that decibel levels were not something that Council could control. He also noted that fireworks noise issues tended to be short lived and by the time a complaint was made, those responsible had moved on. He undertook to work with the Police and Fire Authority to make people more aware of good practices.

##### **2. Councillor Kitterick:-**

“When can an announcement be expected on the creation of a Public Right of Way across the campus of Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College Campus linking University and Victoria Park Road?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke thanked Councillor Kitterick for his painstaking and judicious approach to lobbying on this matter. The Deputy City Mayor confirmed that he would take a decision on the day after the meeting to confirm the right of way. If this was challenged, it would be subject to review by a planning inspector.

Councillor Kitterick asked a supplementary question. He warmly welcomed the decision, but suggested that the decision maker urge the Board of Governors from the college to not object. He felt the proposal was about making things safe for residents, in particular, ensuring that women did not have to walk through Victoria Park alone.

The Deputy City Mayor said that formal and informal routes had been used to engage with the college. He agreed that it was important to have safe walking routes in the city and wanted to undertake actions such as filling in the underpasses at St Margarets to ensure the city was as walkable as possible.

### **3. Councillor Waddington:-**

“Could the Deputy Mayor arrange for the reopening of Buckminster Road at the junction with Anstey Lane to take place as soon as possible in view of the following:-

- 1 This was an experimental closure introduced 12 months ago without prior consultation with residents.
- 2 The many complaints from residents about the impact on their surrounding streets, which are much narrower than Buckminster Road, including an increase of traffic by 81% on Colwell Road and the large number of objections from residents in other nearby residential streets including those on the Minster Grange estate about the increased volume of traffic, excessive speed levels and parking problems which were the unintended but serious consequences of the Buckminster Road closure.
- 3 The proposed changes to traffic movements at the Fiveways junction which will restrict traffic using that junction from turning into Buckminster Road from certain directions, which should result in less traffic travelling along Buckminster Road.”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response stated that the current arrangements were an experimental order and as such there was no legal requirement to undertake pre-consultation on the scheme, but representations could be made during the experimental period, and residents were made aware of this. He noted that the current closure on Buckminster Road had proved effective in reducing volumes of traffic through much of the area of around 2000 vehicles during a day and this had made streets quieter, healthier and safer. He felt that if the current closure was stopped it would be like saying that the extra 2000 vehicles would be welcomed. He noted that officers were looking other mitigation measures, particularly with a view to moving traffic away from Colwell Road, onto main roads and a decision would be taken on this in the new year. In terms of the Fiveways

junction, the intention of the proposed scheme was to reduce the level of all traffic that will enter Buckminster Road and will be a factor when testing the options of further measures on Colwell Road. Based on this response he noted that the answer would be 'no' to the first part of the next question.

Councillor Waddington asked a supplementary question. She requested the figures from the consultation which compared the number of those objecting to the scheme, compared to those numbers who have supported the scheme.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that he was happy to provide these figures, but noted that in consultations that there would be far more objections than submissions in support.

#### **4. Councillor Waddington:-**

"Assuming the answer to the question above is no, or no date is given for the reopening of Buckminster Road, I would like to ask a further question. I understand that if objections are not withdrawn a Public Enquiry has to be held within 18 months of the experimental closure.

When and where will the Public Enquiry into the experimental closure of Buckminster Road be held to determine if the closure will be permanent or brought to an end, and what form will it take? What role can residents who object to this closure play and how can they be heard?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response stated if objections were not withdrawn then it could lead to an inquiry, but this would be rare. The inquiry would be led by the Planning Inspectorate. The inquiry format would be determined by the inspector and guidelines say that they should not deny requests to make reasonable objections. It was hoped that it wouldn't lead to an inquiry and an amicable solution could be found to resident's concerns.

Councillor Waddington asked a supplementary question. She requested a copy of the reply to the questions that she had been given to her questions. She also requested a copy of guidelines about public inquiries to enable this information to be disseminated to residents who continued to make representations about the scheme.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that he was happy to provide those details but didn't wish to see the 2000 vehicles returning to these streets without careful consideration.

#### **5. Councillor Master:-**

"Can the City Mayor confirm when work will start on the Cedar Park Ball court, this ball court has had no investment in it for over 35 years and is in dire need of refurbishment in one of the most deprived parts of the city with serious issues relating to young people."

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response stated that an exciting programme of updates of ball court type spaces was being developed, and feasibility studies of all areas across the city had already been started. Works to Cedar Road, Melbourne Street and Hillsborough Road were expected to start in the first quarter of 2023.



Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He noted that during his previous role he outlined a legacy programme on ball courts and asked that the City Mayor commit to that programme.

The Deputy City Mayor in response commented that there was a commitment to improve all ball courts across the city, and they would be upgraded on the basis of a feasibility study being undertaken.

**6. Councillor Master:-**

“Following on from a very interesting discussion at Heritage scrutiny it became apparent that capacity issues in regards to particularly swimming and pools in the city was at its peak, in regards to the Leisure offer we appear to be retro fitting as much as possible as the building stock is tired and old. With this the 3 most densely populated wards in the city with high levels of socio economic factors and numerous health inequalities amongst a catalogue of other difficulties, could the city mayor consider the possibility of a new fit for purposes Leisure Centre being built within the inner city (preferably Stonegate) to ensure those communities don't lose out and can increase their life chances.”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response thanked Councillor Master for his question, and noted the conversation which took place at the Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission. He further noted that there were 7 swimming pools across the city and he was confident that demand for swimming could be met and that there was suitable capacity. He stated it wouldn't be possible to provide facilities in each ward in the city, but noted that there had been a number of upgrades in leisure centres in recent times.

Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He noted that there were lots of leisure centres in the city, but requested that provision of a new facility be explored.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that Leicester was an exceptional example as it still had a wide range of leisure centres which were provided 'in-house' and it could be ensured that they were affordable. He expressed a wish that more government funding would be provided, but couldn't promise a new facility. He also commented that most people were on average only a 20 minute walk or drive away from a leisure facility. He was proud of the improvements made to leisure centres and said it was an aspiration to make the facilities subsidy free.

**7. Councillor Master:-**

It would not be appropriate for me to name the specific individual concerned but we all know the circumstances which led to the former lead reviewer of the disturbances in East Leicester felt compelled to stand down. Could the city Mayor outline what future plans he has in light of this?

The City Mayor in response stated that he was appalled at the abuse sent to the research team. He noted the lead person was highly recommended, particularly from the Vice Chancellors of Leicester and De Montfort Universities. He had an impeccable track record, was unbiased, but found themselves at the centre of a social media storm which was clearly intended to disrupt the work to look at what happened. The City Mayor said he was adamant that this setback wouldn't deter the review being stopped or delayed.

Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He noted the level of hate and abuse by some individuals towards the review team. He asked that the City Mayor hold firm on the review and not let individuals prevent it.

The City Mayor in response stated that he was determined to have a review of the events that happened, what was behind it and consider the wider community to prevent a recurrence. He felt that there were not just lessons for Leicester as these issues were not unique to the city.

**8. Councillor Master:-**

“Delaying any action until the conclusion of the review that possibly may not happen could be a grave error in the minds of many. As such, could the City Mayor highlight the intervention taken by the LCC since the September disturbances. How have these actions supported communities and what is being done address the ongoing issues and concerns?”

The City Mayor in response stated that a multi-agency group had been meeting since September and was structured into 3 main areas with the aim of understanding the impact and what immediate intervention would be undertaken. The areas were; education, including work with schools and colleges; youth services, including Probation; and local communities, engaging businesses and community groups affected by the unrest. This work would continue and inform the review when it takes place to look at ways of strengthening communities.

**9. Councillor Master:-**

“Could I firstly congratulate the Sikh community and those who have been instrumental lobbying behind the scenes for years to the city council for the wonderful statue that has been erected in Victoria Park, not only is a great piece it also tells a 1000 stories. With this piece being erected, many other communities were very pleased to hear that opportunities for other communities who have contributed enormously over many wars but particularly world wars 1 & 2 would also be able to have something that recognising their contributions. Therefore could I ask the City Mayor what is being planned by the local authority for other communities to have their proud history that recognises their contributions laid besides these great marks of respect.”

The City Mayor in response noted that representatives from the Sikh community had been involved in developing this statue for some time and he referred to the efforts of former Councillor, Culdipp Bhatti on this matter, who was sadly no longer with us and wasn't able to see the statue. The City Mayor commented that when the Sikh community first came to speak to the Council he made it clear to them and to officers that space should be found in Victoria Park for all communities to have relevant war memorials. He also noted that the Sikh community had been proactive in raising money to support this memorial.

Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He asked when the Council would start engaging with other communities on this matter.

The City Mayor in response commented that he was happy to do so immediately. He felt that there were a number of lessons to learn from the Sikh community. He also encouraged elected members to promote this matter and encouraged groups and communities to come forward if they wanted to provide a memorial.

The Lord Mayor commented on the recent Remembrance ceremony, which he attended and said was a brilliant event, and said that the Sikh statue was a good move in affirming the involvement from soldiers from across the Commonwealth. He noted that he had asked the Civic department to ensure the African Heritage community were recognised in the Remembrance ceremony.

**10. Councillor Master:-**

“We are in the month of November which for those that don’t know is Islamic Awareness month, for those that also don’t know Islamic Hate crime is now being recorded at 47% latest Home Office data) this clearly show there are issue and issues that need to be addressed, nearly 1 in 2 reports of Hate crime are Islamophobic against Muslims. The All Party Parliamentary Group the APPG working cross party and engaging with countless others established a clear narrative and definition around “The definition of Islamophobia”, Could I ask the city mayor what is he doing to address these challenges here in the city and make a commitment that we as a Labour Party at the next Full Council meeting adopt the APPG recommendations on Islamophobia which is being adopted universally bar one exception the Tory party, which to most in this chamber will not be any surprise.”

The City Mayor in response thanked Councillor Master for his question. He was proud to talk of the diverse nature of the city, but noted that there was still Islamophobia present in our society. The City Mayor thought that this definition had been adopted, but as it hadn’t, it could be looked into and brought back to Council for consideration.

Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He also thought that it had been adopted. He asked that the City Mayor work with community groups and communities to tackle issues in this area.

The City Mayor in response stated that combatting hate was always a work in progress. He said he was happy to work formally / informally to tackle such issues.

**11. Councillor Master:-**

“Following conversations the club are very pleased with the Local Authorities enthusiasm and offer of support for their ambition to become the first Net Zero grass roots club in the country.

The project already has very senior buy from the United Nations, supported by DMU (German Uni) and Peitz FC in Germany who are the club over in Germany, amongst others interested and participating, something again Leicester can be very proud of, leading on innovation and setting out a landscape for real change as we move into a number of difficult environmental factors.

To align with this Net Zero project the club also aim to create the first ECO park in the city possibly in the country where again the Local Authority will play a leading role in the establishment of this exciting opportunity.

The club truly appreciates the support “would the deputy city mayor comment on this initiative and what the Council’s role might be in supporting this and similar projects?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clark in response stated that he was delighted to

offer his support for this exciting project led by Leicester Nirvana FC. He welcomed organisations in the city stepping up to do their bit towards the climate emergency as he noted that 7% of emissions in the city emanated from the Council and 93% from elsewhere. He looked forward to working with the club to meet their ambitions.

## **12. Councillor Rahman:-**

“I was pleased and heartened to see that the Diwali and Navratari Celebrations were so successful. Furthermore, along with all of city’s residents I am relieved that the city is now experiencing some long awaited calm.

However, many of the causal factors that contributed to the disturbances and the damage done to community relations remain. As such, what work is the Council doing to address these causal factors and to build back trust between all communities so that we may ensure that there is not a repeat of the September disturbances?”

The City Mayor in response stated that, like Councillor Rahman he was also pleased to see that Diwali and Navratri went well. He commented that it was important to ensure that the review into the disturbances was undertaken and its conclusions were followed. He said that there was work being done in the interim. He wanted the review to get underway quickly and that it was concluded in weeks or months, not years.

Councillor Rahman asked a supplementary question. She noted that there were a great deal of young people who were participants in the disturbances and there were issues they faced such as Covid, the cost of living crisis and other structural factors. She asked that it be ensured that young people were engaged.

The City Mayor in response stated that he was distressed as there used to be an effective youth service which had been completely devastated due to the complete loss of funding. The youth service was now more targeted at those who needed particular help and support. He said that there should be more engagement of young people and he looked forward to the election of a Labour government to restore the damage done by the current government.

## **13. Councillor Rahman:-**

“The planned review of the recent disturbances has now been shelved and there is no timeframe stipulated for a potential joint review between the Council and Home Office. As a result many will be waiting indefinitely for answers.

Could the cabinet lead provide a response in the interim with respect to the Council’s response to these tensions at the time and since they occurred?”

The City Mayor in response stated that he had outlined what was being done at the current time in response to the disturbances. He confirmed that the review would still take place and its recommendations would be taken as seriously as possible.

Councillor Rahman asked a supplementary question. She requested that all relevant communities, young people and women be consulted in determining the terms of reference of the review.

The City Mayor in response stated that all of those groups should be given an opportunity to provide views as part of the review. He felt that the Terms of

Reference would be straight forward, to find out what happened and what needed to happen to prevent a recurrence. He felt that there shouldn't be a protracted period of time discussing the terms of reference when there were more important matters to consider.

#### **14. Councillor Rahman:-**

"In light of the Chancellors autumn statement announcements, it is clear that residents will be asked to shoulder more of the burden via Council tax cap rises, increase in the Energy bill caps and real terms increase in income tax across the board.

How will this Council ensure that working families that are already struggling financially are supported throughout these changes?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Russell in response said that the Council ensured that people could access available support with a focus on income maximisation. There was a strong welfare advice offer available as well as some discretionary funds. There was however no new money from the government but the Council was continuing to be as efficient as possible to maximise the help that could be provided, but it was limited in what could be achieved under the continuing austerity.

Councillor Rahman asked a supplementary question. She sought clarification about the types of support provided.

The Deputy City Mayor commented that there were a small number of programmes from the government including the Household Support Grant. There was a challenge arising from the range of short term government funding programmes as they targeted different people and it was difficult to make residents to access the funding they needed. It was noted that the Council was working well provide support, such as opening up libraries as warm hubs. An incident management approach to the cost of living was being undertaken. Ideally more would be done but this would require national funding.

#### **15. Councillor Rahman:-**

"In the last few days we have learnt of the tragic death of a 2 year old child in Rochdale and the role that exposure to mould played in this completely preventable tragedy. The child's family lived in social housing provided by a housing association and had reported the prevalence of mould in their home numerous times. What work is being done in this Council, with other social housing providers and private sector landlords to ensure that every child in Leicester city is safe from this danger?"

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that this was a timely question and she was shocked and saddened by this case. Exposure to mould, like the Grenfell Tower tragedy was another example of landlords holding the power and how tenants voices were being ignored. The proposed white paper from the government on handing power back to tenants had not yet come forward. In respect of housing associations the government were implementing a new act to regulate standards in the sector, but this won't fall to the local authority to implement to enforce as it would be an independent body undertaking this work. The decent homes standard should be fit for purpose, but there didn't seem to be powers to

hold housing associations to account.

The Assistant City Mayor also referred to the private rented sector in the city as the Council had released its strategy for the sector in the past year. The selective licensing scheme had also recently been launched and had already had successes in terms of improvements to some properties. It was intended to look at expanding the scheme across the city. Complaints were received from both housing association and private rented sector tenants and it was of great concern that there were those tenants who felt compelled not to complain because they feared eviction.

Councillor Rahman asked a supplementary question. She noted that the family in this case had said that they felt that racism was a factor into why they were not listened to. What could the Council do to ensure that housing associations treated race as a factor in whether people were treated differently.

The Assistant City Mayor agreed to look into the matter and provide a response.

**16. Councillor Dawood:-**

“Considering the external extremist influences playing a major role in September’s disturbances, could the portfolio lead, advise if there has been any comment/update from Prevent?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Piara Singh Clair said that it was wise not to form a view in advance of the review of the disturbances. He was aware of the extremism which had been evident on social media. He urged people not to get involved in pointing fingers at specific communities and let the Police deal with specific issues where law breaking had taken place.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He noted that in the past, Prevent had been quick to respond to other communities. He felt that it would have been helpful to have a comment from them.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that he had met with staff from Prevent and the St Philips Centre. The indicated that they would not undermine processes during the review, but one of their staff could be contacted if necessary. It was noted that they had done a great deal of work in schools and different communities and were doing the best that they could. It was noted that Councillors had a responsibility to report matters to them.

**17. Councillor Dawood:-**

“Could the Portfolio Lead confirm if Leicestershire Police will be conducting the review of the disturbances.”

The City Mayor in response said that he couldn’t respond on behalf of the Police as it was for the Police and Crime Commissioner to answer. He did however comment that engagement with the Police had been very good and the temporary Chief Constable had frequently been in contact. He understood that the Police would be conducting an internal review.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He appreciated the work that the Police had done but requested that the City Mayor ask the Police to share details of their internal view. He felt that this was a unique situation.

The City Mayor in response stated that he was happy to talk to the Chief Constable and agreed that there was a need to have an understanding of their view. Whilst he felt that there had been a good relationship with the Chief Constable, he didn't feel it was the same with the Police and Crime Commissioner. He noted the suggestion by the Commissioner regarding 10 CCTV cameras and where he wanted to put them, but there were no details about how the monitoring of them would be paid for.

**18. Councillor Dawood:-**

“In a recent Which Survey, Social Broadband tariffs are not being accessed by low-income households, what actions can the authority take to address this disparity”

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Myers in response stated that social broadband tariffs were a good option for qualifying households and the Council would look to raise awareness of them through various cost of living channels such as warm spaces, welfare advice officers and the cost of living web pages. The Council had also reached out to Job Centres around promotion of the tariffs as well as Wellbeing Champions network of community groups and leaders.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He requested that information about the tariffs be publicized on the Council website as other local authorities did this.

The Assistant City Mayor in response agreed to look in to doing that.

**19. Councillor Dawood:-**

“With austerity 2.0 very evident and the damaging budget that will negatively impact the Authority and the Communities we serve. What is the Portfolio leads view in adopting the Community Wealth Model similar to the one in operating in Preston?”

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Myers in response said that he and the City Mayor had been meeting with other public sector organization leaders such as the Police and Universities to develop a Community Wealth Model approach. Plans were being developed for in the new year on recruitment, inward investment and prioritising local procurement, and these would be shared when they were more fully formed. Another project the Assistant City Mayor was working on was looking to maximise opportunities to buy goods and services from the City's small and micro businesses as they tend to become excluded from formal procurement processes. In the longer term wider aspects of the model would be looked at in more detail. In terms of the context of the City, the Council from July to June this year, the Council spent £283m across the Leicester and Leicestershire economy and achieved more than total figure achieved in Preston. He further felt that Leicester was starting from a better position than Preston, but agreed that there were lessons to be learnt from their experience.

Councillor Dawood commented that he felt his supplementary question had been answered, but urged the Assistant City Mayor to look at the Manchester model in order to learn from their experience.

The Assistant City Mayor in response commented that there were a number of things which Leicester had been doing for a generation and ideas from other areas could not just be 'cut and pasted', but an appropriate model for the city needed to

be developed.

**20. Councillor Dawood:-**

“Could the portfolio lead advise of progress in relation to potential development of the Melbourne St enclosed play area. Cllr Dawood also asked for assurance that the work would be completed by April 2023.

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair in response stated that it was intended to start work on 3 sites in the first phase of improvements in early 2023. Ward Councillors would be kept updated regarding progress and it was hoped it would meet the requirements of Councillors and residents.

**21. Councillor Dawood:-**

“I understand the aim of Leicester City Council is to become a carbon neutral and climate adapted city 2030 or sooner. Could the cabinet lead comment on the successes and challenges so far.”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that he welcomed the opportunity to comment on this. He noted a range of achievements such as maintaining the City’s position on the A list for Climate Leadership; carbon literacy training for managers and councillors; a partnership with other organisations to get the whole city to net zero; retrofitting of homes through grants which had been achieved; the Santander cycle hire scheme; electric buses; a net zero bus station; the Gypsum Close re-use shop; the most successful Eco-Schools projects in the country; tiny forests; flood mitigation on the river corridor and retrofitting of Council buildings. He also however noted that there was still more to do and road map had been published, and this included targets such as replacing 12,000 gas boilers, a tripling of bus use and all cars becoming electric, but this needed investment and government support.

Councillor Dawood asked a supplementary question. He welcomed the actions taken and noted that meeting the 2030 target needed government support. He asked what the unique climate risks were for Leicester.

The Deputy City Mayor in response said that all cities had many risks. Leicester managed its risks through risk registers and these included things like heat events and flood risk in some parts of the city. Measures however were being taken to mitigate against these risks.

**22. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“Would the City Mayor like to apologise to the people of Leicester for mishandling the appointment of a Review team to look into the disturbances in East Leicester?”

The City Mayor in response said that he outlined the mechanisms by which the appointments were made in an earlier question. He said that leading academics were sought and were highly recommended by both local universities, as well as groups and representatives from across the city. They had previously advised on matters for the government, were well equipped for the task in the city and there were even supporters from other political parties who recommended the team. The City Mayor said that he made no apology as none was due, for wanting to have an independent review which looked into what happened and why it happened. He felt



that others should apologise for the dreadful attacks on highly respected academics and they have prevented the review from going ahead to do the vital work that needed to be done.

**23. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“The City Council’s new register for landlords across Leicester is going to cost landlords thousands and raise private rental prices in our city. How can the City Mayor justify this in the middle of a cost of living crisis?”

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that she had responded on a similar question earlier in the meeting. She felt that it was important to have proper regulation of the sector as there had been a massive change in the tenure in the city as the private rented sector had doubled in the past 10 years and the Council had a duty to protect citizens and ensuring they had a decent home to live in.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He felt that landlords could take the Council to court, and win the case and the Council would lose vital public funds.

The Assistant City Mayor in response stated that the period for judicial review had passed and no representations had been received. The consultation on the scheme was felt to be incredibly robust, including discussions with Registered Social Landlords. It was felt that there was no decent case to make against the scheme.

**24. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“The new East Midlands Combined devo deal would have brought around £40 million investment into the city each year for the next 30 years why did the City Mayor block Leicester’s access to this fantastic deal?”

The City Mayor in response stated that he felt that Councillor Bajaj was wrong to believe the benefits of the devolution. He felt that there had been no specific commitment by the government or any prospect of the government providing any extra funding as part of the devolution settlement. He also stated that it would mean governance on the city from Nottingham and no opportunity to make the city’s case for capital funding which had been successful in the past.

**25. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“Does the City Mayor agree with the Member of Parliament for Harborough who described him as a Scrooge for attempting to levy additional tax against organisations around Leicester to host Christmas events.”

The City Mayor in response said that, like market authorities across the country the council had a duty to protect its markets. He said that this was done in a sensitive way with reduced rates for charitable purposes and was considerably cheaper than licences elsewhere.

**26. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“What is happening to the Hospital Close site in Evington?”

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that since the Council had taken ownership of the site, work had been undertaken to clear and secure the

site. There were 3 phases of refurbishment of the site with 38 homes currently being worked on and expected to be completed by the summer 2023.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He queried what was being done about the fencing as there had been a lot of anti-social behaviour with young people accessing the site but said he had received no response to emails on this subject.

The Assistant City Mayor in response said that she did recall some conversations about anti-social behaviour which didn't conclude and she was happy to look in to this issue again.

**27. Councillor Bajaj:-**

“Why are visitors to city centre and surrounding areas being penalised with more than doubling the parking charges? including frontline workers, teachers, professionals not to mention everyday shoppers who help our local businesses and the economy grow.”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response stated that this was partly the impact of government cuts. He further noted that that last increase to parking tariffs was eight years ago and the running of car parks was subject to inflation like everything else. He felt that the new tariffs were competitive as they were lower than Nottingham, and the Council continued to encourage people to use public transport.

**28. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

“What has been the cost of creating the cycleways?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that he felt that the question was vague but commented that cycle way improvements tended to form part of bigger projects such as Transforming Cities. If more specific details were provided about any particular cycle way, the Deputy City Mayor was happy to respond.

**29. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

“How many e-bikes are there -in how many locations?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response stated that there were 500 bikes in total about half of which were currently deployed and some were held in reserve. 10 further locations were planned which would bring the total locations to 50.

**30. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

“What did they cost?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response stated that £500,000 funding was secured from the government's Transforming Cities Fund to purchase the bikes and docks. The provider, Ride-On and the sponsor had provided the remainder of the funding and support.

**31. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

“What is running cost -including maintenance and repair?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that as the Council didn't fund the project there was no cost to the Council, and the Council didn't have this information.

**32. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"What income has been achieved so far? can the average income per hiring be identified?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response stated that the scheme operator retains the income as it funded its ongoing commercial operation.

**33. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"What is the budgeted cost per annum-assuming they do not pay for themselves?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that the Council provided no subsidy as the scheme was funded by the Transforming Cities scheme, the operator and the sponsor.

**34. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"How many e-bikes have been stolen so far and how many have been recovered?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that this information would be with the operator. The question has been asked but no response has been provided at the current time. He noted that there has been some information in the media about stolen bikes but noted that the scheme benefited the many overall.

**35. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"When will the powers be given to city wardens so they can issue out fines for fly-tipping and illegal parking on our streets in Leicester?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair in response stated that Council officers already made use of powers to tackle fly tipping and illegal parking through the issuing of fixed penalty notices and penalty charges.

**36. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"What provisions are in place to help the rough sleepers in Leicester?"

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that the Council provided good, well-respected provision. An enhanced rough sleeping offer meant that no one needed to sleep rough in the city. There was an extended outreach service which was out in the city seven days a week and it linked into other services around healthcare. There was support provided by St Mungo's who provided education support to help rough sleepers with employment opportunities. There was also a Street Lifestyles Group and Changing Futures team that provided additional support.

**37. Councillor Modhwadia:-**

"How many empty 1 & 2 bedroom flats/houses stand empty in Leicester?"

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that information wasn't held by the Council as they had no involvement holding information regarding private homes until they have been empty until 18 months at which point the Council's Empty Homes Team becomes involved to support the owners to bring the property back into use.

**38. Councillor Porter:-**

"Over the last 10 years how much has the council spent in total on consultant costs/fees?"

The City Mayor in response stated that this information wasn't available in a readily accessible form and would take considerable research to find out. He commented however that when he was elected that previous administrations were spending considerable sums on consultants and that the Council now spent significantly less. He noted that external support and advice was used when putting in bids which brought substantial investment and sums into the city. He undertook to ask officers to see if it was possible to obtain this information.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He felt that the City Mayor should focus less on what happened before he was elected. He referred to the data on expenditure over £500 and felt that the council was too lax about spending tax payers money, and should follow the advice they are given. Councillor Porter referred to the Council instructing Ricardo Consultants who advised the Council to do more so encourage electric cars, but the Council responded that they didn't support private cars. Councillor Porter felt that the Council should follow the advice they pay for.

The City Mayor in response commented that if that was the question that Councillor Porter wanted, he should have asked it that way. The City Mayor stated that the Council used consultancy in order to minimize expenditure but maximise impact.

**39. Councillor Porter:-**

"Are the park and rides subsidised if so what is the cost?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response confirmed that Park and Ride was subsidised and this was split equally between the City and County Councils. Park and Ride patronage was seriously hit by the Covid pandemic which meant that the subsidy cost for 2021/22 was around £709,000 but this would be offset by £500,000 government grant. The government grant was only available until next year and beyond that there were concerns about viability of Park and Ride.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He queried when the Council would accept that Park and Ride had failed and queried whether people without a car subsidized car owners who used Park and Ride as it was noted that four people in a car could get into the City for about 60p each using the park and ride.

The Deputy City Mayor in response said that in the year before Covid, Park and Ride took 800,000 cars off the road, it promoted bus travel and reduced congestion.

**40. Councillor Porter:-**

“If we exclude student accommodation and HMO's. Over the last 4 years how many new homes have been built in Leicester?”

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair in response said that this question was previously asked at the Overview Select Committee and a response was provided. He further noted that it wasn't possible to separate out student housing, which was a useful addition to the housing stock as it freed up other provision. The Deputy City Mayor was happy to provide figures including student accommodation.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He said that it was disappointing that the information was not provided. He said that the average number of new homes being built was about 700 a year and felt at that rate the Council was never going to get anywhere near the government target which was 40,000 homes as it would take 57 years.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that there had been over 4,000 homes delivered over the past four years, which was a positive level of housing delivery and the government's assessment was that the Council was doing well towards meeting the government target.

#### **41. Councillor Porter:-**

“Since 1.1 2020 how much rent has the council lost in voids?”

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that over the last 2 years the Council had lost an average of £1.4m per year, which represented 1.7% of income. It was noted that that there would always be 'churn' where properties were in between tenants. The bigger concern was felt to be not lost income but the lost opportunity of being able to provide a home for someone or a family. There was a need to ensure that homes were fully up to standard, ie new kitchens and bathrooms but void times were kept to a minimum as much as possible.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He commented that it wasn't just income that was lost, but also homes whilst void were not available and that income funding available to deal with problems such as damp as residents were facing in his ward. He queried what the Council were going to do to speed up times to get homes let sooner and deal with recruitment problems as it was felt that the Council weren't advertising vacancies.

The Assistant City Mayor in response stated that staff shortages were an issue across local government and agency staff were used on occasions. Every effort was being made to reduce void times. It was noted that there would naturally be periods of time in between tenants but the industry standard for voids was 2% and the Council were at that level.

#### **42. Councillor Porter:-**

“What message does it send out if the council rights off loans it has made using public money?”

The City Mayor in response said that it depended on the purpose of the loan. The Council made loans to serve a wide range of purposes and sometime make loans that a commercial operator wouldn't make, as the role of the Council is to seek overall benefits for the people of Leicester. The City Mayor referred to the loan made to Hastings which achieved 10% interest and was a major source of income.

He noted that over 20 years ago, the Council lent the National Space Centre £2m and this gave the Council some control over the project. He also noted that this loan was more of a grant and there was little expectation that the money would be repaid, but its benefit was to support the wellbeing of the city.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He felt there was no reason for the Council to write off the £2m loan to the Space Centre or the £600k previously lent to the Haymarket Consortium. He referred to the fact that the Space Centre had £2.9m in the bank and an income of £6.2m. He felt that this was a giveaway to the Space Centre and queried whether the City Mayor any interests to declare on this matter.

The City mayor in response said that the Space Centre had been a great success. He noted a former Councillor, Bob Pritchard said that it would collapse, but it had received 5 times more visitors than was anticipated and received many bus loads of children who visit it annually. He said that the loan was a grant that brought in £24m of Millennium funding. The City Mayor didn't understand Councillor Porter's reference to conflicts of interest, but suggested if he had any concerns he should raise them with the Monitoring Officer.

**43. Councillor Porter:-**

How many car parking spaces at the Enderby park and ride site are set aside for local businesses?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that pre-Covid there was some contract parking, but now there was none. There were some small agreements in place for parking currently.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He doubted whether there were no spaces allocated for businesses. He also asked that the park and ride which ran through Aylestone provide a stop in Aylestone to allow residents to benefit from cheap bus fares into the city centre, as it was unfair that people who lived out of town could benefit from this.

The Deputy City Mayor in response commented that there was an issue with having intermittent stops on a Park and Ride bus as it would likely lose patronage due to the extended time it would take. The express route currently used was designed to make the route attractive.

**44. Councillor Porter:-**

"The council's plans for a workplace parking tax have failed - how many officers did the council have working on the consultation results and how many hours did the officers spend scrutinising the results of the consultation?"

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clarke in response said that he was proud to have undertaken the exercise. It wasn't possible to specify the amount of officer time spent on the scheme, but it had clearly taken a number of months and officers had to review over 18,000 comments and a consultation report was published and publicly available.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He felt it was disappointing that details were not provided. He felt that the cost of living crisis was in place when the

consultation was started and felt that it demonstrated that the Council were out of touch. He asked that if the Cabinet spokesperson couldn't provide the data, could someone in the Council please provide the data?

The Deputy City Mayor in response commented that it would be a waste of an officers time to undertake this piece of work. The decision to consult on a workplace parking levy was based on a manifesto promise but due to the current economic situation it couldn't be offered. He also noted that the city had a plan for a world class public transport system, but due to a lack of government funding, it couldn't be delivered.

**45. This question was not asked.**

**46. Councillor Porter to say:-**

Under the proposals in the latest draft of the local plan, how many hectares of greenfield land could be lost to development?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said that the Local Plan was an item of business on the agenda and he could raise questions along with other Members. It was also noted that the same question was asked to officers on 4<sup>th</sup> October and an answer was provided.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He said that almost 2 million square metres would be concreted over under Local Plan proposals which he felt was unnecessary. He asked whether the planning spokesperson agreed with him that the proposals needed to be reviewed to reduce the amount of lost green space and worked on with local people on proposals for new housing, rather than following dogmatic government targets which were now likely to be scrapped?

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that answers could be provided during the debate. He did however note that the number of homes which were proposed on brownfield sites was 6,670 dwellings covering 494 hectares which was 71% of housing delivery and 2690 dwellings on greenfield sites covering 196 hectares. There was also a requirement in the Local Plan to provide open space in line with government requirements.

## **50. DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

Moved by Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair, seconded by Councillor Riyait and carried:

That Council:

- a) Notes, that following 3 substantive public consultations, this final submission plan responds to the need for growth, the housing crisis and how we will shape the city of the future. It addresses important issues such as climate change, our economy, transportation and health.
- b) Notes that substantial evidence had been prepared by officers to underpin the Local Plan. This included preserving our environment whilst maximising all options to accommodate housing in the city.
- c) Recognises that we have reached agreement with the majority of districts in

terms of taking almost half of the city's housing need.

- d) Notes the key strategy of the plan to prioritise new housing on brownfield land within the city centre. 71% of the proposed housing are on brownfield land and 21% on greenfield sites.
- e) Notes that there is a typographical error on page 236 as part of Appendix 6 to the Submission Plan which incorrectly includes site 546 Herrick Primary School Playing Fields in the allocation for development. All the other supporting documents confirm this is not the case and Appendix 6 will be amended in the finalised document under the delegation to the Director to correct any inaccuracies before consultation.
- f) Approves public consultation for the Leicester Local Plan (2020 – 2036) pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012 as amended, and thereafter its submission, together with consultation responses, for Examination in Public to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- g) Authorise the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation to make any necessary minor technical/factual amendments to the plan prior to consultation.

#### **51. DISTRICT HEATING COSTS FOR TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS**

Moved by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin, seconded by Councillor Chamund and carried:

That the District Heating Services Charges report be withdrawn.

#### **52. ELECTED MEMBER ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS**

Moved by Councillor Cank, seconded by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin and carried:

- a) That the waiver of the six-month attendance rule provided for within Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act for Councillor Bill Shelton due to illness, be approved; and
- b) Having regard to the extenuating circumstances arising from Councillor Shelton's illness, an extension of time until the end of the current municipal year, 19 May 2022, be granted.

#### **53. BI-ANNUAL REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE JULY 2019 - JUNE 2021 - ANALYSIS OF CASES REFERRED**

Moved by Councillor Barton, seconded by Councillor Cank, and carried:

That the report be noted.

#### **54. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

There was no Executive or committees business.



**55. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Moved by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin, seconded by Councillor Gee and carried:

This Council recognises that there are sustained and escalating pressures on our Council Housing stock in Leicester City meaning that we are no longer in the same position we once were to support the most vulnerable residents.

Due to the loss of stock from Right to Buy, and the absence of a credible National Build programme, we declare a Housing Crisis in Leicester.

We welcome the recent scrutiny Task Group review which looked into this matter and will support their recommendations to be contained within an action plan to be delivered to scrutiny.

**56. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There being no other business, the Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.32pm.