



**Leicester**  
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Wednesday, 22 FEBRUARY 2023 duly convened for the business hereunder mentioned.

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**BUSINESS**

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

The minutes of the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 are available to view at:

<https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/documents/g11965/Printed%20minutes%20Thursday%2024-Nov-2022%2017.00%20Council.pdf?T=1>

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

4. **STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR / EXECUTIVE**
5. **PETITIONS**
  - Presented by Members of the Public
  - Presented by Councillors
6. **QUESTIONS**
  - From Members of the Public
  - From Councillors
7. **MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**
  - a) Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers
  - b) Pay Policy Statement and 2023/24 and Gender Pay Gap Report 2022

c) Youth Justice Plan

**8. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

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

**9. NOTICES OF MOTION**

a) SAMWORTH BROTHERS

b) UNITED NATIONS TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

c) ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP (APPG) ON BRITISH MUSLIMS'  
DEFINITION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

**10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

**PRESENT:**

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

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

**Abbey Ward**

MANJIT KAUR SAINI

**Aylestone Ward**

ADAM CLARKE  
NIGEL CARL PORTER

**Beaumont Leys Ward**

HEMANT RAE BHATIA  
VI DEMPSTER  
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

**Belgrave Ward**

PADMINI CHAMUND  
NITA SOLANKI  
MAHENDRA VALAND

**Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields**

SUE BARTON  
ELAINE HALFORD  
KULWINDER SINGH JOHAL

**Castle Ward**

PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK  
DANNY MYERS

**Evington Ward**

DEEPAK BAJAJ  
SHAHID KHAN

**Eyres Monsell Ward**

ELAINE PANTLING  
KAREN PICKERING

**North Evington Ward**

LUIS FONSECA  
RASHMIKANT JOSHI

**Rushey Mead Ward**

PIARA SINGH CLAIR  
RITA PATEL  
ROSS WILLMOTT

**Saffron Ward**

ELLY CUTKELVIN

**Spinney Hills Ward**

MISBAH BATOOL  
MUSTAFA MALIK

**Stoneygate Ward**

KIRK MASTER  
SHARMEN RAHMAN  
AMINUR THALUKDAR

**Thurncourt Ward**

TERESA ALDRED  
STEPHAN GEE

**Troon Ward**

DIANE CANK

**Westcotes Ward**

JACKY NANGREAVE

Fosse Ward

TED CASSIDY  
SUE WADDINGTON

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RUMA ALI  
DANIEL CREWE  
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Knighton Ward

MELLISA MARCH  
DR LYNN MOORE  
GEOFF WHITTLE

Western Ward

LINDSAY BROADWELL  
GARY O'DONNELL

Wycliffe Ward

MOHAMMED DAWOOD

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

There were no Lord Mayor's announcements.

## **67. 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.

## **68. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

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

That the minutes of the meeting of Council held 24 November 2022, copies having been circulated to each member of the Council, be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record.

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

Earthquake – Turkey / Syria

The City Mayor reflected upon very sad news emerging from Turkey and Syria regarding the recent earthquakes which had affected the area, and the distress felt by those caught up in it. He was aware that some local Leicester people had lost family and friends and sincere condolences were passed to them.

The City Mayor noted that Leicestershire Fire and Rescue had sent a team to search for survivors amongst the scenes of devastation. They had since rescued 8 people between the ages of 2 and 90, in extremely difficult circumstances. The City Mayor had visited the City's Turkish Education Centre and Hamidiye Mosque to assure the community that the city was thinking of them. He was sure that Members would want to join him in wishing the local Turkish and Syrian communities well.

Voluntary sector

The City Mayor made Council aware that officers had been reviewing and re-shaping the voluntary sector strategy which was expected to be launched in a few weeks. The strategy would guide the Council's relationship with the sector for the next four years. He thanked Councillor Malik and officers for developing the strategy and noted that more details would be shared in due course as there was an emphasis on engaging a wider audience for the strategy.

## **70. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

## **71. QUESTIONS**

The following questions were asked by Members of the Public.

### **1. Mr David Rollins**

"Given that metering seems to be the way forward and given that we are an

environment city at a time when climate change is a big issue, would it be worth putting in cabling for solar panels, while they are putting in metres, so then the buildings would be solar panel ready in the near future and this would help solve the problem of high energy costs for the most vulnerable. There may even be grant funding for this somewhere.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that this suggestion had been passed to the Housing Technical team to consider from a feasibility perspective and to the sustainability team to consider existing external funding opportunities.

## **2. Mr David Rollins**

“Whatever happens, the tenants do need to be kept in the loop. The Mayors comments that it’s not the tenants who decide how much to pay was vastly insensitive. There will be cost implications for tenants and we may need to move if its cost prohibitive. Will there be that option within the city council housing for people to move out of the district heating scheme housing into somewhere more cost effective.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that she didn’t recall any comments from the City Mayor as suggested. It was true, as consumers, that it was not within the Council’s gift to set prices. Tenants would receive notification of the charges with 28 days to consider whether to accept the change. Housing Department staff would discuss the proposals with tenants, and they could hand in their notice if they wished to, but it will be explained to them that they would be better off in a Council property where district heating was in place as costs remained lower compared to a property where it wasn’t in place.

## **3. Mr David Rollins**

“What will happen to people who just cannot afford a steep rise in energy costs?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that where tenants could not pay, the Tenancy Management Team would support tenants at an early stage who were struggling to pay the charges. There was also strong support for tenants who were facing financial issues from the Supporting Tenants and Residents Team.

Mr Rollins asked a supplementary question. He asked how tenants would find out about these support options and how they would access them?

The Assistant City Mayor in response stated that after the meeting tonight, tenants would be written to, and include with the letter would be details of how to access the support.

## **4. Mr David Rollins**

“Will tenants be able to choose providers or be stuck with whomever the council chooses?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that tenants on district heating would not be able to choose providers on the open market. However, tenants had benefitted from 30% cheaper heating costs than the open market for the last 10 years and would continue to do so.

Mr Rollins asked a supplementary question. He noted that there were benefits as a tenant being on district heating, but he felt that there was a very high standing charge and it was unfair that tenants couldn't move away from the provider.

The Assistant City Mayor in response stated that within the appendix to the report it showed that the Council was absorbing the additional management charges. Consideration was being given to whether the Council should challenge the standing charge and it was felt there may be an option to re-negotiate. The Council were paying an additional £4m burden, so the Council would be challenging the provider to reduce costs.

**5. Mr David Rollins**

“Can better thermostatic controls be installed as part of the process as the controls we have at John Minto House are almost useless, which is one reason why the building is so hot, not as the presenting officer put it that tenants don't bother with turning the heating off because it costs the same.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response stated that the point that officer meant to make was not that people weren't bothering to turn off their heating, but they didn't have an incentive to turn it off. It was recognised that some of the controls were not fit for purpose and that new controls would be installed later in 2023.

**6. Mr David Rollins**

“Will the council offer tenants the opportunity to enter the bidding process for non-district heating properties that match their (often medical or access) needs, where the difference in energy costs would be prohibitive if they stayed in district heating related properties. I believe this should seriously be put forward for vulnerable adults already struggling.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that following a meeting she had been at earlier in the evening, the proposals no longer were shown to be cost prohibitive. As mentioned earlier, as part of the transition to the new contract there would be the opportunity to talk to various support teams about options.

**The following questions were asked by Councillors**

**1. Councillor Whittle**

“Following an increase in the severity and regularity of accidents at the junction of Northcote and Queens Road, residents of Knighton are very concerned about safety at the junction. Please can we be advised as to when exactly we can hope that there will be a solution put in place here”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response noted that he had been made aware of recent incidents and noted that officers were investigating the situation. A camera survey had taken place and vehicle movements were being checked to find the cause of the issue. It wasn't felt that the temporary traffic measures were causing the problem, but he understood local concerns. He undertook to provide results of the survey with ward Councillors.

Councillor Whittle asked a supplementary question. He noted that there had been 10 collisions in the past year and requested assurance that when a solution is proposed that it is given a high level of priority due to the accidents which had taken place.

The Deputy City Mayor in response gave assurance that it was a high priority as there had been a history of accidents in this location.

## **2. Councillor Waddington**

“Would the Deputy Mayor Councillor Adam Clarke agree that it is time for Leicester City Council to explicitly articulate serious concerns about the Leicestershire County Council Local Government Pension Fund’s approach to fossil fuel investments?

In particular will he comment on the recently consulted upon draft Net Zero strategy and call for;-

1. a review of the investment strategy and propose a responsible policy which rules out any new investments in fossil fuel companies
2. a freeze on any new investments in the top 200 publicly- traded fossil fuel companies
3. divestment from direct ownership of fossil fuel funds
4. an approach to quantify and address climate change risks affecting all other investments
5. investment in companies that will reduce gas emissions and minimise climate risk
6. a recognition that fossil fuel investments should be considered as part of the Council’s ‘carbon footprint’ and divesting our pension fund is one of the most important steps we can take to reduce the impact on our City and the World?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that he agreed to support all the points that were made. He noted that he and Councillor Waddington sat on the Pension Committee managed by the County Council, and also that the City Council made significant contributions to the pension scheme, but investment decisions were not in our control, but could only be influenced through the Committee. He further commented that there were legitimate debates to take place about how divestment took place and taking the pension fund to net zero. He felt that divestment should be seen as part of a major emergency, but the strategy was too vague and open to interpretation. He also commented that officers deserved a good, but ethical pension.

Councillor Waddington asked a supplementary question. She agreed with Councillor Clarke on his response, and asked if it was time be become clear in opposition to the ‘woolly compromise’ that it was felt the net zero strategy was.

The Deputy City Mayor in response agreed. He praised the work of Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire on this matter and said that he was minded to vote against the net zero strategy.

## **3. Councillor Bajaj**

“Making Leicester a fair city was a key priority for the City Mayor, How does he think he’s made Leicester a fairer city in the last 4 years?”

The City Mayor in response thanked Councillor Bajaj for his question. He noted that it was a key priority which he and Councillor Bajaj were elected on four years ago. He noted that Councillor Bajaj had consistently supported Labour moves to deliver on this commitment. He also said that Covid and the cost of living crisis couldn’t have been predicted, requiring rising financial assistance for residents for which £5.5m of funding had been provided. He also noted that there was a second round of anti-poverty funding being distributed. The City Mayor also noted that ward funding had been provided and thanked Councillor Bajaj for his work as a ward Councillor in investment into Council estates. The City Mayor also referred to initiatives such as those helping people back to work, the Employment and Construction Hubs which it was felt that Councillor Bajaj had supported when he was a Labour Councillor.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He felt that with rising Council Tax, District Heating increases, rent increases that the city was more divided than ever and much less of a fair city.

The City Mayor in response stated that he disagreed. He felt that Councillor Bajaj supported commitments when he was in the Labour group and was proud of them when he voted for them.

#### **4. Councillor Bajaj**

“A key priority for the Deputy Mayor for transport this term was Connecting Leicester. Does he believe he has been successful?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that Connecting Leicester had been instrumental in changing transport in the city. Areas were now better connected and there were better cycling and walking connections. There had been an 82% growth in cycling and 18.5km of cycleways developed. The manifesto that he felt that Councillor Bajaj had supported introduced the Bus Partnership, developed 2 new bus stations and facilities for disabled people. There had been considerable recognition nationally for Leicester for the changes it had made. Councillor Clarke stated that he was not anti-car but wanted to enable the right mode for the right journey. He also noted that there had been investments in car infrastructure such as Putney Road and new car parks, particularly in Neighbourhoods.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He suggested that Councillor Clarke should ask the residents of Beaumont Leys Lane whether they thought, due to its plans for transport. Is he now going to admit he’s got it wrong?

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that during the pandemic, pop up cycle lanes allowed key workers to get people to work, and these were supported by the Conservative government. He stated that transport plans for the city were making it more safe, and reiterated that Councillor Bajaj had previously supported them.

#### **5. Councillor Bajaj**

“The environment should be the front of all our minds. So, I am pleased it was a key priority for the Council in this term. How has the Deputy Mayor for Clean air and the

Environment Emergency made Leicester more sustainable?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response noted that there was currently a climate emergency and the council had developed a strategy in response to this involving the whole city. The plan had 151 actions within it and a road map to net zero. The plan contained actions such as training to senior managers and councillors, energy efficiency measures, tackling fuel poverty and green flag status for schools. This Council had been recognised as a beacon for its work in this area. Other measures included, tree planting, the biodiversity action plan, living bus shelters, and taking thousands of people out of flood risk. The Deputy City Mayor was proud of his record.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. How did the City Mayor believe building new houses on green spaces and travellers camps, despite there being no government targets will improve the environment in our city?

The Deputy City Mayor in response noted that some Councillors didn't turn up to sessions on the local plan or didn't listen to what was being said.

## **6. Councillor Bajaj**

“How has the City Mayor increased safety across Leicester since 2019?”

The City Mayor in response said that there had been a long list of initiatives which he felt that Councillor Bajaj should know as he supported them. The City Mayor referred to the knife crime strategy, a domestic abuse strategy, selective licensing strategy, Public Spaces Protection Orders, 20mph zones.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He felt that the City Mayor had not increased safety at all and he had a policy of divide and rule. He asked for an update on the investigation that was promised.

The City Mayor in response said that he was responsible for lots of things, but the disturbances in the East of the city were not his fault. He noted that the Council provided considerable support to the Police and had an extensive network CCTV to assist the Police. He noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner had provided some CCTV cameras, but hadn't provided any ongoing funding for monitoring. He also suggested that the Police and Crime Commissioner could restore the 200 Police Officers which had been lost and he hoped that Councillor Bajaj would lobby him on this matter.

## **7. Councillor Bajaj**

“What has the Assistant Mayor for Housing done to create homes for all in our city. A key priority for the council?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that the Council had declared a housing crisis. The Council were working hard to increase the number of homes and had invested over £200m in new affordable housing, including new Council housing. 6 sites had been completed and another 3 were planned along with smaller sites providing 140 homes. The Council also increased its acquisitions during the pandemic and bought over 340 properties to turn them into Council homes. It was planned to buy 150 more. Other examples of delivering Council homes included the purchase of Hospital Close, which is being refurbished and the

purchase of the Zip building. The case for a housing delivery company was also currently being considered.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He queried how the Assistant City Mayor thought making life harder for landlord who lease properties would increase property in the city?

The Assistant City Mayor in response commented that she didn't feel that things had been made harder for landlords. The Selective Licensing Scheme was a minor issue for landlords and it was fundamental to raising standards in the sector. The focus was on having a sustainable private rental sector in the city.

## **8. Councillor Bajaj**

"Lifelong learning has been a key priority of this Council since 2019. What lessons has the City Mayor learnt in that time?"

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Myers in response noted that since May 2019 there had been 10,823 enrolments in the Adult Education service, which has been improving the lives of those who need it. Courses included areas like English literacy and IT skills focussed on people who are economically excluded. During the pandemic the service provided a family learning service to ensure that children were school ready.

The Assistant City Mayor also referred to a new fashion academy which had supported 300 people who were majority female, teaching them textile skills and about workers rights. There had also been a construction academy which had 600 enrolments including people such as ex-offenders helping them into sustainable employment.

The Assistant City Mayor also referred to the loss of European funding, and other government funding which had been taken from cities to fund more wealthier areas.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He thanked the Assistant City Mayor for his response. He felt however that the City Mayor had not learnt from his mistakes and that he should do what everybody wanted and scrap the role of City Mayor.

The Assistant City Mayor in response commented that Councillor Bajaj wanted to replace the City Mayor with a regional Mayor, based in Nottingham. It was felt that the Shared Prosperity Fund associated with the regional Mayor would not work out well for Leicester as it would mean £1.3billion over 30 years. The Assistant City Mayor commented that the Council had achieved significantly more funding under current arrangements, and the city had a local Mayor with more influence.

## **9. Councillor Rae Bhatia**

"Groby Road is facing traffic chaos, especially during peak hours and the bus lane which has been introduced recently is also a contributing factor. This has aggravated further with the five ways junction roadworks. The queues tail back all the way close to Heathley Park Drive most of the time. The buses for which this bus lane has been put in place are also stuck behind the merging traffic before they can reach the start of the bus lane itself. Slow movement of vehicles in that built-up traffic is adding to emissions. With a new Brook Mead school coming up soon on a site next to Garland Crescent, this could get even worse. In addition, the city bound

traffic has now started to shift to Anstey Lane and now that is becoming heavy too during the peak hours. Residents and road users, 81% of them to be precise as per our survey, want something done about it. Many others also feel that the length of the bus lane is too excessive and should have started from somewhere near Medina Road Junction. Therefore, can the City Mayor please advise what actions will be taken to remediate this? Thank you."

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response acknowledged that bus lanes could be divisive and create debates within communities. He referred however to the 6 buses an hour in this location which at peak times could carry 60 people, taking significant cars off the road. He also felt that a lot of the recent issues in the area were a result of the work being undertaken at the Five Ways junction, as well as gas works being undertaken on Woodgate. He further noted that actions had been taken in the local area with changes to lane markings and signage which should enable vehicles to move better. He felt that longer term improvements would be seen.

Councillor Rae Bhatia asked a supplementary question. He challenged the number of buses going through this route. He felt the new school due in the area would also cause problems and the lanes available had been halved. He requested that this issue be looked at in more detail.

The Deputy City Mayor in response agreed that a transition to a new transport model would be challenging, but the intention was that travel would be conducted in the best way. The proposed school would need to have a robust travel plan in place. He commented further that staff were looking at the challenges in the area, and looked forward to working the Councillor Rae Bhatia to achieve the vision of using the right mode of transport.

**10. This question was withdrawn.**

**11. Councillor Westley**

"Beaumont Park is one of the only large green patch residing within the residential areas of Beaumont Leys and has been the lifeline for our residents. Its inclusion in the local plan for commercial and employment development is causing tremendous anxiety, anguish and anger with the residents, especially that almost 70% of it will be taken over. If it was the other way round, may be the residents would have seen the plan being pragmatic, but not now. To aggravate the situation further, a travellers transit site has been suddenly introduced at the very last stage of the consultation process, which in fact only allows residents to challenge it to the government inspector. It is not actually a consultation per se. Beaumont Leys has already contributed towards a permanent travellers site on Greengate Lane. We have done our fair share. MATU records also show that only two incidents of illegal transit occupation took place in last two and half years and they were quickly removed. So there's no demand in the ward for it. We, the three Beaumont Leys ward councillors, therefore oppose any such move to put additional transit site within our ward. Hence can the City Mayor assure the people of our ward that this will be removed from the plan. Thank you.?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said that Council approved a plan for submission to the Planning Inspector, the previous November, following a long-term consultation. He recognised that ward Councillors will want to support their communities, but there had been a full review of all site options before making the submission in the Local Plan as it was approved. The Deputy City Mayor

encouraged people to become involved in the consultation which was currently underway, where views would be forwarded to the Planning Inspector.

Councillor Westley asked a supplementary question. He asked whether the City Mayor would look into re-allocating the site to the other side of the A46. He noted that he had won a previous battle with the Planning Inspector and would do so again if need be.

The Deputy City Mayor confirmed that it was the right thing to do, to engage with the Planning Inspector as they should listen to representations. He noted that the plan needed to deal with housing and employment land amongst other matters, but the city had negotiated a deal with the County Council and district councils regarding them taking a higher level of housing allocation. The Deputy City Mayor wished Councillor Westley all the best with engaging in the consultation.

## **12. Councillor Westley**

“Could I ask the assistant mayor for housing we have around 417 void properties in the city with a housing crises families living 3rd floor flats the leys high rise flats that have been empty for 2 years what is being done to bring them back into use and combat the overcrowding.”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that she was pleased that the Housing division had returned to pre-Covid void levels. Out of 20,000 homes, 387 were considered void, which represented 1.98% which was in line with industry standards. The Assistant City Mayor committed to looking into any particular cases that were raised with her. The Assistant City Mayor referred to the Leys flats, and the time taken to refurbish them had been a frustration, brought about by Covid, staffing issues and the ability to secure a contractor. Phase 1 had now been completed and it was hoped to have a contractor on site in coming weeks.

Councillor Westley asked a supplementary question. He asked when the Leys flats would be occupied by tenants.

The Assistant City Mayor didn't have that information, and didn't want to make a guess. She was happy to discuss this with Councillor Westley or the Chair of Housing Scrutiny Commission after the election.

## **13. Councillor Bajaj**

“The Green Open Spaces on Brent Knowle Gardens and Home stone Gardens have now been published in the Leicester Local Plan 2020 2036 as future sites for housing , can the City Mayor confirm that these would be removed due to local opposition from the local community and retained as green open spaces for the foreseeable future.”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said that he understood the two sites being referred to had raised concern. He admired the way that ward councillors had engaged with local residents and made their case at the Ward Community Meeting. He noted that there had been a number of years of consultation on the Local Plan and taken the proposals through Scrutiny, where Councillor Bajaj had given his consent. The Deputy City Mayor noted the process which started with 200 sites in the city had been reduced through analysis and 54 sites were being taken forward. He confirmed that it was the right thing to do, to put views to the Planning Inspector. He noted that it wasn't a given that the sites would

be developed.

Councillor Bajaj asked a supplementary question. He noted that there were people protesting outside the Council meeting and he had spoken to a young boy who asked him save playing fields. He felt that these two sites were important to save.

The Deputy City Mayor in response noted that there was a process for the Local Plan and people were doing the right thing to engage with the process, with ward Councillors there to support them. He encouraged people to engage with the process and put concerns in writing. He congratulated officers on their negotiations where they had reduced the housing targets within the city where agreement was achieved to increase targets outside the city.

#### **14. Councillor Master**

“Could the City Mayor give us an outline as to why we are no further with undertaking an inquiry into the Disturbances back in Sept 2022 which were promised some 5 months ago. There are also rumours that some are calling for the Home Office to take the lead and that the Local Authority are being pushed out. Now I don't wish to state the obvious but this approach I'm being told will have a very negative impact for the city, is this rumour and opinion shared by the City Mayor?”

The City Mayor in response said that the originally planned review didn't go ahead because of the issues on social media and defamation towards the previously proposed review lead. He was however determined that there should be a review. The City Mayor had been in discussions with the government about taking the review forward, but there was no question of the Local Authority being removed from the process. Having national approval for the review was to be welcomed, it was regretful that it was taking some time.

Council Master asked a supplementary question. He urged the City Mayor that the people of the city must be at the forefront of the review and not be dictated to by external forces.

The City Mayor in response gave assurance that this would be the case.

#### **15. Councillor Master**

“Could the City Mayor give a commitment to Evington Rd which is one of the busiest roads in the city for shopper's, eateries and much more. It is in need and would truly benefit from some much-needed capital investment. Parking, lighting, shop front improvements, CCTV are a few areas that would benefit from investment. This road in Stoneygate has produced from small pop-up shop fronts to many which are now renowned as national and international brands and business and we the city should recognise these efforts and invest in the creation of employment for the community alongside ensuring residents and locals benefit too. So would the City Mayor give us his assurances that some parts of the city like Stoneygate will not lose out and will be looked at regarding future capital monies?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said that the Council were currently consulting in Stoneygate on measures to improve parking for businesses and residents. This followed work to improve the open space at Evington Place, as well as the ball court at Cedar Road play area through a £250,000 investment. The Council recognised its district centres like Evington Road provided a vital service

and the Council would support residents and businesses to deliver improvements. The focus was on delivering improvements at the heart of local communities.

Councillor Master asked a supplementary question. He welcomed the response and asked the City Mayor to attend a meeting of residents and businesses.

The City Mayor in response said he was happy to attend a meeting.

**16. Councillor Master**

“I recently met with the City Mayor to highlight the fantastic work being undertaken by the Eid Festivals both in Spinney Hill and Victoria Park, which have become fantastic platforms like Diwali and Vaisakhi for many across the city to engage in . I also highlighted the very disproportionate levels of support for these events in comparison to other important events and festivals across the city. Could the City Mayor confirm his intention to invest in this year's events and meet with the groups to ensure a comprehensive package of support is established going forward which reflects the importance of their work and securing, Eid festivals as staple events for the city.”

The City Mayor in response thanked Councillor Master for the question. He was keen to develop festivals as described in the question, and he paid tribute to the organisers. Council support varied to different festivals, some was direct and some was planning support. It was understood that Eid prayers took place across five of the city's parks with a focus on Victoria Park and Spinney Hill Park. Using City parks meant lower costs on things like road closures and traffic management, and they are provided for free. The Council also provided planning support enabling value for money for the organisers. He said that the Council should continue to invest in Eid festivals.

**17. Councillor Master**

“I'd like to thank the City Mayor and my colleagues for tonight supporting a very important motion on Islamophobia, could I ask that the City Mayor with the Executive lead for this area draw up a timetable of action and programmes to meet this commitment in this electoral cycle to ensure it can be rolled out as we move forward?”

The City Mayor in response said that he would be supporting the motion and he would provide support against all hate. He felt that it was important to take forward in this electoral cycle and beyond.

**18. This question was withdrawn.**

**19. Councillor Modhwadia**

“How has the Assistant Mayor of Health improved the health and care in Leicester?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Dempster in response thanked Councillor Modhwadia for the question and welcomed the opportunity to highlight the work of the Council's Public Health team, which had been recognised as one of the outstanding Public Health teams in the country. She noted that public health matters had been moved to be central to every part of the council, such as cycling, housing and homelessness and the team shaped policy as it moved forward. There had been initiatives such as the work during Covid with community organisations,

taking a hyper local approach. Inequality had been growing across the country and measures had been put in place to mitigate the plight of residents. The Public Health team had worked with the Integrated Care Board on a fuel poverty project and with Neighbourhood Services on providing warm spaces. They had worked with Leicester Partnership Trust on Crisis Cafes and with Parks on community gardens. Partnerships with the NHS had been strengthened following government reorganisation of health services. There was a current piece of work ongoing with University Hospitals of Leicester and Ellesmere school which would gain students work experience leading to employment. A dedicated allotment for veterans had been developed. A task and finish group had looked into the poor pregnancy outcomes for Black and Asian women. The Assistant City Mayor felt that these highlighted projects had only given a sense of what had been achieved. She did however feel that the good work being done locally was undermined by the government in areas such as funding for Adult Social Care, health workers pay and caps on places for medical training.

Councillor Modhwadia asked a supplementary question. He noted that a day centre in his constituency was going to close down on Hastings Road and residents asked that it be saved to support children's mental health. He asked that it be confirmed that the centre not be closed.

The Assistant City Mayor in response stated that this centre wasn't part of her work area, as it was the responsibility of the Deputy City Mayor, Social Care and Anti-Poverty. She was however aware of the engagement with the families who use the centre, and said that it was important to work with them as individuals, having a proper plan for them and to ensure that this was achieved.

## **20. Councillor Modhwadia**

"How many new job opportunities has the City Mayor created in Leicester in the last 4 years?"

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Myers in response said that over the 4 year period over 950 jobs had been created through investment activities, 689 jobs through other economic regeneration initiatives and 500 new apprenticeships. These figures did not include other jobs created through capital spending programmes such as those at Waterside and Connecting Leicester. He did however note that the number of unemployment claimants had gone up and felt that that national government economic policy had created some of these problems.

Councillor Modhwadia asked a supplementary question. He said that it was easy to say that there had been an increase in jobs, but in his constituency there had been a loss of jobs, despite the textile academy training programme.

The Assistant City Mayor in response said that the Textile Hub had brought better skills and rights awareness. It wasn't possible to control the market, but 3000 jobs had been brought in.

## **21. Councillor Modhwadia**

"Does the City Mayor believe he has made the city enjoyable for young people since 2019?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said yes.

Councillor Modhwadia asked a supplementary question. He said that most young people go out of the city for jobs as there were no jobs available in Leicester.

The Deputy City Mayor in response stated that since 2019, the Council had continued to make the city a place for young people to thrive and develop. Schools were an environment which was inclusive and allowed for development of learning. Additional school places had been provided and specialist provision in mainstream schools had been developed as well as 60 places at the Knighton Fields Centre. Early Help provided easy to access resources to help families.

The Deputy City Mayor also noted that there were enjoyable experiences for young people such as; the Christmas ice rink on Jubilee Square; accessible parks which had received investment, particularly skate parks; multi use game areas; pop up museums; and the city beach. The city had also been made safer for young people through clean air programmes. There had also been investment into football and improvements to gyms.

## **22. Councillor Modhwadia**

“Does the City Mayor have a plan for saving the textile industry in Leicester?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that it was unfortunate that the government had not provided funding for an enforcement body or provided the Council with the powers to do it. The Council had a textiles focussed strategy and invested in the textile and fashion academy which supported workers in skills and the English language. Funding had been secured from the Community Renewal Fund to deliver the Leicester Textiles Renewal project including innovation support, compliance reviews, grants, training and skills. There had also been the launch of the Leicester Made ethical label. New funding had been secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for a programme of support for the sector.

Councillor Modhwadia asked a supplementary question. He noted that he recently visited the Green Lane Road as the area used to survive on textiles. He said that the businesses were asking him to reduce the business rates as all the businesses were suffering.

The Deputy City Mayor queried whether Councillor Modhwadia had a pecuniary interest.

Councillor Modhwadia withdrew the supplementary question.

## **23. Councillor Porter**

“Since 2011 how much money in total have the Labour members (councillors mayor(s) etc) taken in allowances, payments and expenses”

The City Mayor in response said all Councillors were paid in alignment with the Members Allowance Scheme and the amounts are published on the website.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He estimated the amount to be around £12m which he felt was a huge amount of money and he suggested that the Labour group received £1m per year in allowances. He asked for confirmation that every Labour group member had to pay 5% of their allowances to the party?

The City Mayor in response said that the amount of allowances in this authority was similar to other authorities, like in some Liberal Democrat authorities and the amounts were modest compared to the time put in. The City Mayor noted Councillor Porter's concerns, but he did some research and found out that Councillor Porter had received £130,000 over this time period in allowances.

#### **24. Councillor Porter**

"Is it correct that the Labour led council purchases gas at 9.5 pence per kilowatt hour?"

The City Mayor in response said that the Council paid 3.4 pence per kilowatt hour, but from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 it would be 9.5 pence per kilowatt hour, which would be less than the market rate due to aggregate buying power.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He doubted that district heating was environmentally friendly as it used double the national average than individual houses which had boilers.

The City Mayor in response disagreed with the question. He felt that combined heat and power was environmentally friendly and the price was lower than was paid elsewhere. Once metering had been introduced there would be incentives to reduce use and the price would be significantly cheaper.

#### **25. Councillor Porter**

"Is it correct that 25% of the city's carbon emissions come from road traffic?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that it was 26.5% in 2020.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He suggested that most of this was down to private cars asked, 99% of which probably met emissions targets. He asked the Deputy City Mayor to join him in condemning people driving highly polluting vehicles.

The Deputy City Mayor in response said that figures in other cities such as Bristol which had 33%, and Nottingham which had 32.6% of carbon emissions from transport which meant Leicester was doing well comparably.

#### **26. Councillor Porter**

"What is the current price for a standard adult ticket for the Richard III visitor centre and what was the price when the attraction first opened in 2014?"

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Singh Clair in response said that the current price structure was £10 for an adult ticket, £9 for an over 60 or student ticket and £5 for a child ticket. A family ticket was £25. In 2014 there were no family tickets, but it cost £7.95 for an adult, £7 for over 60s and students and a child ticket cost £4.75. He also noted that a £10 ticket enabled entry for a year.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He felt it was good news that there were reduced ticket prices. He felt that the centre had not met Council expectations and recommended that ticket prices continue to be reduced.

The Deputy City Mayor in response commented that this was a popular attraction

as the day of internment showed. He felt that the price was about right and was affordable. The centre had won awards and accolades and was known nationally and internationally. It was a good decision to open the visitor centre and visitors would often also visit the Guildhall, and in future they will enjoy the new redeveloped Cathedral and the Jewry Wall museum.

**27. Councillor Porter**

“Modern slavery and exploitation in the city's textile industry: why did the Labour led council turn a blind eye?”

Deputy City Mayor, Councillor Clarke in response said that the Council did not turn a blind eye. He said that the City Mayor had been working on this issue since becoming City Mayor. Councillor Waddington had also undertaken investigations into this area.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He felt that it was pretty clear that the Council had been turning a blind eye to the matter and that only when the national press became involved did the Council respond.

The Deputy City Mayor in response said that when the media cover the story in the city, they were surprised. They noted that the government had not followed through on its promises. The Inspector for Labour Market Enforcement supports the Council's activities. Lord Leveson looked into the matter and said that the Council 'was to be applauded' for all that it was doing.

**28. Councillor Porter**

“Is it false that the district heating scheme is more environmentally friendly than each individual household having their own boiler and burning all the gas that they need to get their warmth?”

Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Cutkelvin in response said that it was true that the district heating scheme was more environmentally friendly than each home having its own boiler.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He disputed that it was cheaper and said that district heating used twice as much gas.

The Assistant City Mayor in response said that since the district heating scheme had become operational the network had saved almost 90,000 tonnes of carbon compared to the use of individual boilers.

**29. Councillor Porter**

“Does the Labour led council have proposals in the current draft of the local plan to demolish The Gilmorton Rooms, the only remaining community centre in Aylestone and the local shop which is a lifeline for so many people?”

The City Mayor in response said that both buildings were tired and needed to be replaced and that there were better things to do with the site. He was surprised that Councillor Porter didn't want better facilities.

Councillor Porter asked a supplementary question. He commented that it was in the public domain that Councillor Clarke had a bad reception at his ward meeting. He

asked that the City Mayor commit to removing this site from the Local Plan. He felt that the new facility should be provided before the old ones were removed.

The City Mayor in response said that the existing 2 buildings were not fit for modern purpose, and there was not enough room to put something alongside. There would be a need to identify temporary arrangements for the shop, nearby to enable it to continue.

## **72. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICERS**

Move by the City Mayor, seconded by Deputy City Mayor Councillor Singh Clair, and carried:

That Council approves the appointment of the Council's Electoral Services Manager and Senior Electoral Services Officer as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers which will support the process required to authorise the signing of temporary voter authority certificates.

## **73. PAY POLICY STATEMENT AND 2023/24 AND GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2022**

Moved by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Malik, seconded by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Dempster, and carried:-

- a) That Council approves the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 set out in Appendix A of the report; and
- b) That Council notes the Gender Pay Gap Report for 2021/22 set out in Appendix B of the report.

## **74. YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN**

Moved by Assistant City Mayor Councillor Dempster, seconded by Councillor Batool, and carried:

That Council:

- a) Notes the achievements from 2021-22; and
- b) Agrees the Plan for 2022-23.

## **75. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

There was no Executive or Committees business.

## **76. NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **a) SAMWORTH BROTHERS**

Moved by Councillor Kitterick, seconded by Councillor O'Donnell and carried:

- 1) "This Council recognises Samworth Brother's partnership work with Leicester City Council on addressing food insecurity and hunger in the City.

- 2) This Council also recognises Samworth Brothers as a major employer of Leicester people.
- 3) The Council Members believe that workers' rights, backed by recognised trade unions, are a key part of improving people's lives in the city and ensuring that workers do not have to rely on food banks to avoid going hungry.
- 4) The Council Members, therefore, resolve to back the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) campaign for unionisation, better pay, full sick pay, and additional workers' rights at Samworth's places of work.
- 5) For Council Members with Samworth Employees in their Ward offer support and signpost those workers to the Bakers Food and Allied workers Union Campaign and wherever possible, support the union with campaigning including leafleting and holding ward based meetings.
- 6) The Council Members ask the City Mayor to write to the management of Samworth Brothers in support of this campaign."

Councillor Bajaj abstained from the vote on motion and requested that this be noted.

b) UNITED NATIONS TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Moved by Councillor O'Donnell, seconded by Councillor Kitterick and carried:

- 1) Leicester City Council declares its support for the United Nations Treaty on The Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), an historic treaty, which once being ratified, will completely prohibit the developing, testing and using of nuclear weapons.
- 2) Leicester City Council recognises the necessity of creating a nuclear weapons-free world and as such deeply regrets the United Kingdom government's refusal to sign or ratify this landmark treaty.
- 3) In adopting this resolution, the council therefore unequivocally declares its support for the TPNW. Furthermore, Council calls on the United Kingdom government to work for global denuclearisation by:
  - Signing and ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, thereby joining the global majority of countries opposed to nuclear weapons.
  - Cancelling the replacement of Trident, Britain's nuclear weapons system.
  - Utilising all diplomatic avenues possible to work towards a nuclear-free world.

Councillor Bajaj abstained from the vote on motion and requested that this be noted.

c) ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP (APPG) ON BRITISH MUSLIMS' DEFINITION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

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

- 1) This Council notes the Motion to adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group

(APPG) on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia – Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness”

- 2) Islamophobia is a growing issue, both locally and nationally, as Muslims were targeted in 47% of all religious hate crime offences recorded in England and Wales in 2021/22, meaning they experience far more religiously motivated hate crime than any other group.
- 3) That 75 academics, over 750 Muslim organisations and institutions, Plaid Cymru, the Labour Party (England & Scotland), the Liberal Democrats (England & Scotland), the SNP, the Scottish Conservatives, the Scottish Greens, 50 councils nationwide and many more have adopted the APPG definition of Islamophobia.
- 4) As per the Public Sector Equality Duty enshrined in the 2010 Equality Act, the council must give due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for members of communities with a protected characteristic, including Muslims, such that they are able to participate in society on an equal footing with their non-Muslim counterparts.
- 5) Islamophobia is one of the principal barriers to the participation of Muslims in public, economic, political, and social spheres of life and must urgently be addressed.

This Council believes that:

- Adopting a definition of Islamophobia is essential to tackling Islamophobia in a targeted and effective manner.
- Without a definition of Islamophobia, one cannot identify how Islamophobia manifests itself and functions and therefore, cannot devise meaningful policies or strategies to address it.

This Council therefore resolves to: -

- 1) To adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia
- 2) Work with Elected members, Council officers and Communities and all relevant stakeholders to both raise awareness of the issues surrounding Islamophobia and to challenge and tackle instances of Islamophobia.
- 3) Write to Government urging the adoption of the APPG definition of Islamophobia.
- 4) Work with schools, transport companies, the police force, and other public and private bodies to tackle Islamophobia at a local level.
- 5) Collaborate with the local Muslim community to challenge Islamophobia and to meet their needs such that they are encouraged to participate in public life.
- 6) Take further steps to tackle and raise awareness of Islamophobia, such as organising Islamophobia training, holding local events on the issue of Islamophobia, etc.
- 7) Work with other local stakeholders such as the local MP to raise awareness of Islamophobia in parliament and urge the UK Government to adopt the APPG

definition of Islamophobia.

Councillor Bajaj abstained from the vote on motion and requested that this be noted.

**77. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The City Mayor thanked the Lord Mayor for his chairing of Council over the past year.

There being no other business, the Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 11.45pm.