



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, 16 JANUARY 2025 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 21 November 2024 are available to view at [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 21 November 2024, 5:00 pm](#)

Copies are also available from Governance Services 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**

- 7A Review of Polling Districts
- 7B Council Tax Support Scheme 2025-26

8. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

- 8.1 Motion 1: Child Poverty and Child Benefit Cap

8.2 Motion 2

9. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Call in of Executive Decision – Capital Budget Monitoring April – September 2024/25

PRESENT:

BHUPEN DAVE, LORD MAYOR

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

Nags Agath

North Evington Ward

Ravi Mahesh
Sanjay Modhwadia

Aylestone Ward

Scott-Kennedy-Lount
Nigel Porter

Rushey Mead Ward

Bhupen Dave
Geeta Karavadra

Beaumont Leys Ward

Hazel Orton
Hemant Rae Bhatia
Paul Westley

Saffron Ward

Ted Cassidy
Elly Cutkelvin

Belgrave Ward

Shital Adatia
Yogesh Chauhan
Jaiantilal Gopal

Spinney Hills Ward

Misbah Batool
Mustafa Malik

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Ward

Sue Barton
Elaine Halford
Kulwinder Singh Johal

Stoneygate Ward

Raffiq Moosa Mohammed
Manjula Sood
Yasmin Surti

Castle Ward

Mick Gregg
Patrik Kitterick
Liz Sahu

Thurncourt Ward

Teresa Aldred
Abdul Osman

Evington Ward

Deepak Bajaj
Zuffar Haq

Troon Ward

Diane Cank
Mohinder Singh Sangha

Eyres Monsell Ward

Elaine Pantling
Karen Pickering

Westcotes Ward

Adam Clarke
Sarah Russell

Fosse Ward

Susan Waddington

Western Ward

George Cole

Syed Zaman

Vi Dempster
Molly O'Neill

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

Wycliffe Ward

Stephen Bonham
Ashiedu Joel
Manjit Kaur Saini

Knighton Ward

Melissa March
Lynn Moore
Geoff Whittle

1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Lord Mayor's Announcements.

2. 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.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

"That the minutes of Council held on 21 November 2024, be taken as read and are approved as a correct record."

4. STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR/EXECUTIVE

Flooding Statement

The City Mayor expressed sympathy to all those affected by the recent flooding and extended thanks to Council staff, volunteers, and members of the authority who contributed to the flood recovery efforts. The City Mayor highlighted the importance of collaboration with the Environment Agency on future schemes to address the growing challenges posed by climate change, and the Council's commitment to prioritising its own flood defence programmes. Furthermore, the City Mayor confirmed that he had contacted government ministers to urge the swift provision of flood recovery grants for families affected.

Devolution Statement

The City Mayor referred to the government's publication of the White Paper on Devolution and Local Government Reform, which outlines proposals to establish strategic combined authorities with elected mayors and to transition from the current two-tier model to unitary authorities. While details on implementation remain under consideration, the City Mayor acknowledged that Leicester's population size, alongside potential changes to local authority boundaries, has been a point of discussion. The City Council will continue to engage with stakeholders as plans develop and remains focused on ensuring the best outcomes for the city.

Executive Changes

The City Mayor announced that Deputy City Mayor Councillor Russell would step down from the Executive team on the 7th of February, expressing gratitude to Councillor Russell for her significant contributions across an extensive portfolio. The City Mayor also confirmed that Councillor Dawood will be joining the Executive as Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Adult Social Care. Further details regarding portfolio responsibilities will be

shared in due course.

5. PETITIONS

Petitions from Members of the Public

No petitions were received from Members of the Public.

Petitions from Councillors

No petitions were received from Councillors.

Petitions to be debated

No petitions were received to be debated.

6. QUESTIONS

Please note that a full record of the questions and responses is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) Time codes for each question will be provided before the wording of the question.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Jane Russell

0:09:10 - 00:16:52

“I am the Secretary of ERNA (Evington Road Neighbourhood 'Association). Our members have become increasingly concerned about the number of fast-food establishments on Evington Road who are trading in apparent breach of their planning conditions by staying open later than 11pm. Some 20 of these businesses were reported to Planning in August 2024. Another business was refused extended hours, this went to Appeal and the refusal was upheld in July 2024 but no action appears to have been taken in either instance.

Our members would like to know when Planning will take action to rectify these breaches and proactively investigate whether or not other fast-food establishments on Evington Road are in breach of their planning conditions? We would like meaningful actions to be taken within a clear timetable and for these to be communicated to local residents through Stoneygate ward Community Meetings.”

Councillor Cutkelvin provided a response to this question and to Jane Russell's supplemental question.

2. Val Fisher

0:16:52-0:22:24

“J & A Pharmacy is a shop in Evington Village's shopping arcade on Main Street Evington Village LE5 6DN. Residents learned that this was closing in the middle of January '25 with the loss of the post office and pharmacy. Almost at the same time patients at the Surgery at 10 The Common LE5 6EA realised that this would also close on 6th December, 2024 leaving many of them with the only option to travel to St Elizabeth's Medical Centre in Netherhall, LE5 1DR, two bus rides away.

The impact of these closures together is of huge concern to all residents, but particularly people who are reliant on public transport. Losing these vital services could destroy and inhibit development of this area and people's lives. Will the Council now join local residents in supporting calls to have these services reinstated?”

City Mayor provided a response to this question and to Val Fisher's supplemental question.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

1. Cllr Chauhan

0:22:40-0:29:50

“It was extremely sad to witness that parts of our city were hit by floods once again twice in less than 18 months. We were assured in this chamber when it was raised last time that the city council will put proper arrangements in place, but as witnessed a week ago nothing has changed since then. There was no proper emergency support structure in place and if there was any then no timely information was cascaded by the officers to the councillors. When field officers arrived on the scene, they were repeating the same lines as what belongs to them and what to the environment agency etc, etc. If you recall, we requested for a single point of contact for the residents but that didn't happen. Can the City Mayor provide us with a full report on what steps were taken since last flooding as clearly those steps were not sufficient. Can he also reassure that resources will be made available now to fill the gaps in preventative measures, especially to the areas which are prone to it.”

Cllr Whittle provided a response to this question and to Cllr Chauhan's supplemental question.

2. Cllr Modhwadia

0:29:50-0:32:00

“North Evington is currently short of council housing and there is a huge demand for it. We have now been told that City Mayor is moving £90m from capital funds to revenue budget, although when previously asked we were told that capital monies cannot be shifted to revenue. So how come this is being done now? And if it can be done then can some of it be used towards council housing in the ward where it's desperately needed.”

City Mayor provided a response to this question.

3. Cllr Rae Bhatia

0:32:00-0:36:18

“Now that no contractor has been found to take up the train station revamp work it might be a blessing in disguise. Would the City Mayor reconsider the decision to commit £5m of council's scarce funds towards it and bring that back into use for more needful priorities across the city and at the same time potentially improve council's reserves which are getting dire with every passing month.”

City Mayor provided a response to this question and to Cllr Rae Bhatia's supplemental question.

4. Cllr Haq

0:36:18-0:38:55

“How many children's Care homes are in Leicester and how many of them are registered with Ofsted.?”

Cllr Russell provided a response to this question and to Cllr Haq's supplemental question.

5. Cllr Haq

0:38:55-0:44:30

“Businesses in Leicester city centre are struggling and lots of shops are closing, with the amount of constant roadworks and parking issues in the city centre, will the city mayor address the issues?”

City Mayor provided a response to this question and to Cllr Haq's supplemental question.

6. Cllr Kitterick

0:44:30-0:48:20

“On a scale of 1-10 (1 being totally unlikely, 10 being absolutely certain), what are the chances of the Leicester Railway Station redevelopment project staying within its current projected budget?”

Cllr Whittle provided a response to this question and to Cllr Kitterick's supplemental question.

7. Cllr Kennedy-Lount

0:48:20- 0:51:00

“The Flooding Report for Storm Henk published last month states a Deadline of April 2025 to work in conjunction with the Environment Agency to explore opportunities to improve flood defences in Aylestone Meadows Car Park at Marsden Lane and to better divert flows away from properties. Considering there was another breach of water last week what progress to date had been made?”

Cllr Whittle provided a response to this question and to Cllr Kennedy Lount’s supplemental question.

8. Cllr Kennedy-Lount

0:51:10-0:53:50

“In the aftermath of Storm Henk several schemes were set up by the then government including Council Tax discounts and Business Rate relief. As yet nothing of a similar scheme has been put forward by the current government for the current floods across the city last week. Considering we meet next month for the city’s budget, can the cabinet head give assurances these discounts and reliefs will be made available by a local led scheme irrespective of national government grant?”

Cllr Whittle provided a response to this question and to Cllr Kennedy Lount’s supplemental question.

9. Cllr Sahu

0:53:50-0:55:45

“Following on from Adult Social Care scrutiny meeting last week where it appeared that Care Experienced hadn’t been incorporated into all the Equality Impact Assessments, can I seek confirmation that this has now happened?”

Cllr Malik provided a response to this question and to Cllr Sahu’s supplemental question.

7. MATTERS RESERVED TO COUNCIL

7A. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) at time 0:55:45-1:02:40.

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Russell and carried that

Council:

“Approve the Scheme of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations for the City of Leicester as detailed as Appendix A to be formally adopted on 1 February 2025 when a revised electoral register will be published; and

Delegate to the (Acting) Returning Officer any decision to designate an alternative polling place if a building becomes unavailable for any reason before an election, subject to appropriate consultation with relevant local stakeholders.”

7B. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2025-26

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) at time 1:02:40-1:35:45.

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Russell:

“Note and consider the results of the public consultation ran from 30 September to 10 November 2024.

Approve the adoption of the Council Tax Support Scheme detailed at Appendix 1 with effect from 1 April 2025, noting that the proposals have been modified to take account of feedback received during the consultation as referenced in 5.10 of the report.

Note that the Director of Finance will review the operation of the Scheme after the first six months to assess its operation and impacts. Should this review indicate a need to propose a new or revised Scheme for 2026 then appropriate procedures, including public consultation if appropriate, will be triggered.”

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Russell:

“To add another band, as described at paragraph 8.4 of the report. This will retain the current maximum of 80% support for non-vulnerable households with bands of 80, 60, 40, and 20% (dependent on circumstances). Vulnerable households will have bands of 100, 80, 60, 40, and 20%. Restriction of support to that available at band B or band C will be as stated in the report.

To note the advice of the Director of Finance and City Barrister.”

Following the debate, under Council Procedure Rule 29 of the Council’s Constitution, three Councillors requested a recorded vote.

For the motion: Councillors: Agath, Aldred, Bajaj, Barton, Batool, Bonham, Cassidy, Clarke, Cole, Cutkelvin, Dempster, Halford, Joel, Kaur Saini, Malik, Mohammed, Moore, O’Neill, Pantling, Pickering, Russell, Singh Johal, Singh

Sangha, Sood, Soulsby (City Mayor), Surti, Waddington, Whittle, Zaman.

Against the motion: Adatia, Cank, Chauhan, Gregg, Haq, Karavadra, Kennedy-Lount, Kitterick, Mahesh, Modhwadia, Orton, Osman, Rae Bhatia, Sahu, Westley.

Abstention from the motion: Councillors: Dave (Lord Mayor).

The Lord Mayor put the amended motion to the vote and declared the motion carried.

8. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Child Poverty and the Two Child Benefit Cap

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) at time 1:36:00-2:06:16

Moved by Councillor, Waddington, seconded by Councillor Clarke:

Leicester City Council wishes to express its deep concern about the growth in child poverty in Leicester and nationally.

The latest study published by the Social Metrics Commission (SMC) found that more than one in three children nationally -36% - are living in poverty, and the Leicester figures are even higher because of the lower levels of income among Leicester families. Child poverty dropped to 27% under the previous Labour Government, but under Conservative Governments it has risen each year from 2015 to the present levels.

The two child benefit cap has resulted in 55% of poor children living in families with three or more children, and the cap has contributed to the highest levels of child poverty ever recorded.

We recognise that the Labour Government is dealing with the legacy of a financial black hole and that it will want to address child poverty as soon as possible. We call upon the Government to give this the highest priority and will write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor to ask them to do so with all urgency, beginning with abolishing the two child benefit cap.

As a Council we will also do everything possible within our powers and resources to combat child poverty so that all Leicester children can grow up free from poverty and deprivation.

The Lord Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared the motion carried.

Motion 2

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) at time 2:06:16-2:50:45

Councillor Sahu declared an interest in the item and left the chamber.

Moved by Councillor Haq, seconded by Councillor Kennedy-Lount:

This Council notes the following:

Leicester residents suffer from an unacceptable lack of access to GP and primary care services. According to a recent BBC analysis Leicester has the second worst GP patient ratio in England with 3262 patients per GP.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjd51y9vn9do#:~:text=The%20analysis%20looked%20at%20the,Leicester%20%2D%203%2C262>

With GPs being designated as the key gatekeepers to NHS treatment by the new Labour Government, the lack of GPs in Leicester is closing the door to vital health services for people living in the city.

Leicester already has a 40% child poverty rate, a diverse population with poor health and high levels of deprivation. It has one of the worst life expectancy differential between city and county.

Whilst NHS staff are doing a great job under relentless pressures since its creation the Leicester Integrated Care Board (ICB), has consistently failed to improve Primary Healthcare in Leicester.

An example of this, is the ICB's decision to close the local GP surgery in Evington Village, meaning that patients registered at this surgery and without their own transport, will now face 4 bus journeys to visit their GP at the main surgery. This is very impractical for a person who is feeling unwell, many of whom are elderly. This situation will result in more ambulance call outs, adding further pressures to an already overstretched service and contributing to the intense pressures staff are already working under in A&E, causing even longer waiting times for patients, which is already a major concern.

This council, therefore, resolves the following.

To write to the Secretary of State for Health and NHS England to take immediate action, to ensure that primary care services in Leicester are improved and if we don't get constructive action within 8 weeks we will be calling for further action in full council.

AMENDMENT

Moved by Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor Dempster:

This Council notes the following:

Leicester residents suffer from an unacceptable lack of access to GP and primary care services. According to a recent BBC analysis, Leicester has the second worst GP patient ratio in England, with 3,262 patients per GP.

[*The places with the worst GP shortages in England revealed - BBC News*](#)

NHS staff are doing a great job under relentless pressures.

This council, therefore, resolves the following:

To write to the Secretary of State for Health and NHS England to take action to ensure that primary care services in Leicester are improved.

To ask officers of the council to report back to Scrutiny with the Secretary of State's and NHS England's response at the earliest possible opportunity.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT

Moved by Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor Dempster:

That the motion read to say "Full Council" instead of "Scrutiny" on the final sentence of the motion to read: "To ask officers of the council to report back to Full Council with the Secretary of State's and NHS England's response at the earliest possible opportunity."

The Lord Mayor put the amended motion to the vote and declared the motion carried.

9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Council 16 January 2025 Livestream - YouTube](#) at time 2:50:45

Moved by Councillor Kitterick, seconded by Councillor Rae Bhatia:

"We the undersigned wish to call in the Executive Decision below as it constitutes £3,553,000 of spending largely covering up Capital Project overspends with no wider discussion of the best use of these funds at a time when the council is under severe financial pressure."

The Monitoring Officer provided a procedural clarification that rule 12 of part 4D of the constitution governs call-ins, stating that:

"When considering a matter called-in, the Council may either: - Support the Executive's decision, in which case it shall be confirmed with immediate

effect; or - Recommend a different decision to the decision maker.”

The Monitoring Officer went on to state that it is for the proposer of the call-in to articulate therefore an appropriate motion upon which the chamber can vote at the end of the debate, and suggested that this could be something like *“The City Mayor is recommended to reconsider the Schemes set out in the Capital Budget Monitoring Report April – September 2024/25”*

Following the debate, the Lord Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared the motion lost.