



Leicester
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE FIFTEEN O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Wednesday, 30 APRIL 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. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Council Tax Support and Benefits

Motion 2: Community Centres, Libraries and Museums

4. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

PRESENT:

BHUPEN DAVE, LORD MAYOR

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

Nags Agath
Charleigh Barnes

Aylestone Ward

Nigel Porter

Beaumont Leys Ward

Hazel Orton
Hemant Rae Bhatia
Paul Westley

Belgrave Ward

Shital Adatia
Yogesh Chauhan
Jaiantilal Gopal

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields Ward

Sue Barton
Elaine Halford
Kulwinder Singh Johal

Castle Ward

Mick Gregg
Patrik Kitterick
Liz Sahu

Evington Ward

Deepak Bajaj
Zuffar Haq
Jenny Joannou

Eyres Monsell Ward

Elaine Pantling
Karen Pickering

Fosse Ward

North Evington Ward

Dilip Joshi
Ravi Mahesh
Sanjay Modhwadia
Rushey Mead Ward

Bhupen Dave
Geeta Karavadra
Devi Singh Patel

Saffron Ward

Ted Cassidy
Elly Cutkelvin

Spinney Hills Ward

Misbah Batool
Mustafa Malik

Stoneygate Ward

Raffiq Moosa Mohammed
Manjula Sood
Yasmin Surti

Thurncourt Ward

Teresa Aldred
Abdul Osman

Troon Ward

Diane Cank
Mohinder Singh Sangha

Westcotes Ward

Adam Clarke
Sarah Russell

Western Ward

Syed Zaman

Vi Dempster
Molly O'Neill

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

Wycliffe Ward

Stephen Bonham
Ashiedu Joel
Manjit Kaur Saini

Hanif Aqbany
Mohammed Dawood

Knighton Ward

Melissa March
Lynn Moore
Geoff Whittle

1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Lord Mayor's Announcements.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Please note that a full record of the of the declarations of interest is available on the recording of the meeting at [Special Council 30 April 2025 - Part 1 - YouTube](#) at time 0:11:00-00:14:01.

Councillors Karavadra and Singh Patel declared they are users of the community centres.

Councillor March declared she could not partake in the first motion Council Tax Support Scheme due to the nature of her work.

3. NOTICES OF MOTION

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Special Council 30 April 2025 - Part 1 - YouTube](#) at 00:14:01-1:33:48.

Motion 1: Council Tax Support and Benefits

Proposed by Councillor Patrick Kitterick, Seconded by Councillor Nigel Porter to move:

This Council Notes with concern the effect of the changes to Council Tax Support in Leicester, agreed by the Full Council in January 2025, and the potential impact of the billions of pounds of cuts to welfare provision recently announced by Liz Kendall, Member of Parliament for Leicester West and Secretary of State for the Department of Work & Pensions.

The City Council meeting specifically notes the following.

1. Councillors have been contacted by numerous local residents informing us of the hardship and distress caused by the imposition of these changes, we believe this is only the tip of an iceberg of the suffering these changes have caused.
2. Previous re-assurances about the safety net procedures for people losing out appear in certain cases not to be working.
3. Since the changes to Council Tax Support were agreed by Leicester City Council in January, the Government has announced a raft of deep and cruel cuts to Welfare Benefits so people on the lowest incomes in the city may well be doubly hit by cuts both locally and nationally.
4. The designated Task Group of councillors to look at the impact of the

Council Tax Support changes is only due to have its first meeting on 12th June 2025, whilst the crisis in people's finances from the extra council tax charges is happening now.

The council, therefore, calls for the following

- A. To allocate additional monies to a discretionary fund to cover the shortfall in people's incomes from the withdrawal of Council Tax Support. The discretionary fund should work in such a way that no-one who loses out from the recent changes in Council Tax Support, should have to pay for these changes in 2025/26. This one-off allocation should come from funds allocated to the bizarre Cafe Project at the King Richard III visitors centre and the bottomless pit of a project which is the Leicester Railway refurbishment scheme. The reason for this is so that the real impact on Council Tax bills in practice can be evaluated, alongside the looking at the potential impact of the proposed national welfare cuts.
- B. For the City Mayor and members of the city council to write a joint letter to Liz Kendall MP to ask her to re-consider and withdraw the cruel cuts that she announced which will hit hardest the most vulnerable people in Leicester and the rest of the UK.

During the debate on the substantive Motion, the following Amendment was moved and seconded:

AMENDMENT

City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Cutkelvin to move:-

To strikethrough the entirety of the existing motion and replace with the following:

This council notes:

- a) with regret, the decision of the Tory and Lib Dem coalition Government in 2012 to cut entirely the national fully funded council tax benefit scheme and to transfer responsibility for the design and funding of such schemes to local councils
- b) the devastating cuts made by the then Government to local council budgets and services, particularly in deprived areas such as Leicester
- c) that local authorities of all political controls have therefore been required to target and reduce levels of council tax support
- d) that this council adopted its current scheme at its meeting in January this year, which includes a wide-ranging scheme of support for those in greatest need
- e) that seeking to avoid any detriment to households cannot, as advised by the Chief Finance Officer, be met from the capital programme and could only be achieved by further cuts in services.

The council resolves to encourage the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to review, as they intend, the implementation and impact of the amended

scheme during this year, with a view to making recommendations for future years.

Further, it calls upon central government to continue the process of restoring council funding to reflect the needs of areas, such as Leicester, with significant deprivation.

Following the debate, the Lord Mayor put the amendment to the vote. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30(c) of the Council's Constitution, a recorded vote was taken.

For the amendment (29): Councillors: Agath, Aldred, Aqbany, Bajaj, Barton, Batool, Bonham, Cassidy, Clarke, Cutkelvin, Dawood, Dempster, Halford, Joel, Kaur Saini, Malik, Mohammed, Moore, O'Neill, Pantling, Pickering, Russell, Singh Johal, Singh Sangha, Sood, Soulsby (City Mayor), Surti, Whittle, Zaman

Against the amendment (20): Councillors: Adatia, Barnes, Chauhan, Dave, Gopal, Gregg, Haq, Joannou, Joshi, Karavadra, Kitterick, Mahesh, Modhwadia, Orton, Osman, Porter, Rae Bhatia, Sahu, Singh Patel, Westley.

After some further general debate on the (amended) Motion, a closure Motion (being a Motion to move to a vote) was moved, seconded and carried.

There immediately followed a vote on the (amended) substantive Motion which was carried.

Motion 2: Community Centres, Libraries and Museums

Please note that a full record of the of the discussion is available on the recording of the meeting at [Special Council 30 April 2025 - Part 2 - YouTube](#) at 00:00:00-01:31:50.

Proposed by Councillor Hemant Rae Bhatia, seconded by Councillor Patrick Kitterick to move that:

1. The council's "Museum Service Vision" with proposals to virtually close public access to Abbey Pumping Station, Newarke Houses Museum and Belgrave Hall.
2. The launch of a consultation on the widespread "de-funding" of libraries and community centres across Leicester. This consultation has caused huge concern across the City of Leicester
<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/library-community-centre-proposals-2025/>
3. These much loved facilities appear to be paying the price for the out of control project which is the refurbishment of Jewry Wall Museum.
4. The council is also set to embark on a bizarre £550,000 project to

enhance the cafe at the King Richard III Visitor Centre whilst closing other museum and community facilities across the city.

5. Despite contributing over £16 million to the botched re-development of Jewry Wall Museum, equivalent to around £130 for each household in Leicester, the generous citizens of the city will be likely to be charged at least £10 a time to visit a facility that they have already heavily contributed to.

6. That no serious scrutiny has taken place of the Museum Service Vision prior to its announcement and implementation and no serious interrogation has been carried out of the proposed operation of Jewry Wall Museum when it eventually re-opens after many years of being closed to the public.

7. Community Centres and Libraries are now in line to be cut at a time when the 150 highest paid officers in the council are costing the people of Leicester around £20 million a year. When the most Senior Officers of the council were asked whether this could be reduced by 10%, possibly through natural turnover of posts, councillors were told that this area of cost could not possibly be cut, not by a single officer.

This Council, therefore, calls for the following

A. The suspension of the implementation of the Museum Service Vision whilst the proposals contained within it and the impact of the changes put forward undergo proper council scrutiny.

B. The cancellation and withdrawal of the Community Centre and Library consultation in order to end the anxiety and uncertainty hanging over these much-loved facilities. Any future consultation process must be subject to Full Council approval and the Full Council shall have the final decision on any changes arising from such consultation.

C. That alternative cuts to council spending are explored, especially in reducing the burden of the £20 million bill for the top 150 officers at Leicester City Council.

During the debate on the substantive Motion, the following Amendment was moved and seconded:

AMENDMENT

City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Cutkelvin to move:-

To strikethrough the entirety of the existing motion and replace with the following:

The council notes the way in which, despite central government cuts, it has continued to invest in and maintain support for an extensive network of high

quality, accessible libraries and community facilities and a wide-ranging museums service.

Particularly the council recognises the extensive and important investment taking place at Leicester Museum and Art Gallery and the soon to be reopened Jewry Wall Museum.

The council also celebrates the award-winning success of the Richard III Visitor Centre, which has now attracted more than half a million visitors. This council greatly values the crucial role libraries and community centres play in the lives of people from all backgrounds and across our many diverse communities within Leicester. This council regrets the extent to which the consultation, which is to seek the views of Leicester residents, has been misrepresented.

The council notes, with regret, the extent to which other authorities have reduced their commitment to museums, libraries and community centres and is aware that neighbouring authorities either have no such provision or have cut what little they had.

This council calls for the following:

- a) progress on the delivery of the museums service vision to be considered by the appropriate scrutiny commission within six months and then on a yearly basis thereafter
- b) in response to concerns raised over opening hours at Newarke Houses, between May and September, this museum also to open on a Wednesday, which is an addition to current proposals
- c) all proposals arising from the community centre and libraries consultation to be fully examined at scrutiny prior to the publication of any decision notice.

Following the debate, the Lord Mayor put the amendment to the vote. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30(c) of the Council's Constitution, a recorded vote was taken.

For the amendment (28): Councillors: Agath, Aldred, Bajaj, Barton, Batool, Bonham, Cassidy, Clarke, Cutkelvin, Dawood, Dempster, Halford, Joel, Kaur Saini, Malik, March, Mohammed, Moore, O'Neill, Pantling, Russell, Singh Johal, Singh Sangha, Sood, Soulsby (City Mayor), Surti, Whittle, Zaman

Against the amendment (19): Councillors: Adatia, Barnes, Chauhan, Dave, Gopal, Gregg, Haq, Joshi, Karavadra, Kitterick, Mahesh, Modhwadia, Orton, Osman, Porter, Rae Bhatia, Sahu, Singh Patel, Westley.

After the recorded vote, the Lord Mayor declared the amended motion carried.

4. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no other urgent business, the meeting concluded at 21.10pm.

