



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Waddington - Chair

Councillor Bonham
Councillor Porter

Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Rae Bhatia

In Attendance:

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin
Assistant City Mayor Councillor Whittle

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178. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Clarke and Cllr Osman.

179. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

Councillor Porter declared that he had asked for the item on Cycle Track Demarcation to come to the Commission.

180. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was noted that in the minutes from the meeting on 25 June, the Executive members were present, but were not marked as being so on the minutes.

AGREED:

- 1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission held on 27th August be confirmed as a correct record.

2) That the minutes of 25th June be amended as above.

181. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Officers were advised that members would have read reports prior to the meeting.

182. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

183. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

184. WORKER EXPLOITATION - VERBAL UPDATE

The Director of Tourism, Culture and Economy gave a verbal update on the response to the task group on worker exploitation. It was noted that:

- The work of the Scrutiny Task had been well-received and had been presented to the City Mayor Briefing on 22nd May. The Director of Tourism, Culture and Economy had been working with the executive over recent months on the executive response, and a discussion was pending at an upcoming City Mayor Briefing with other executive members.
- The establishment of the government's Fair Work Agency that was looking to bring enforcement bodies together was being tracked. It was anticipated that this would go live from April 2026.
- The Deputy City Mayor for Housing, Economy and Neighbourhoods had been an observer on the Local Government Association (LGA)'s work on modern slavery. An LGA report on this was imminent and it was hoped that this report could inform the executive response to the task group. Additionally, council guidelines on the issue had been found online and it was aimed to incorporate these into the executive response.
- A review of the work of Operation Tacit – the intensive enforcement activity undertaken by national enforcement bodies between 2020 and 2022 in Leicester's garment sector - had been undertaken by the national Director of Labour Market Enforcement. Publication of this review had been delayed at a ministerial level since 2023, but had been published on the day of this Scrutiny Commission Meeting. This was relevant work that would inform the executive response. The Task Group should take credit for lobbying for the report to be published.
- The Operation Tacit report had shown that in the overall findings, the degree of non-compliance in the garment industry in Leicester was lower than in other manufacturing sectors. Additionally, worker exploitation in terms of forced or compulsory labour as defined in the Modern Slavery

Act 2015 was not found.

- The Operation Tacit Report contained a recommendation to ensure that planning for future prevention needed to be founded on robust assessment of available evidence.
- A written executive response would come before the Commission in January 2026.

In discussions with Members it was noted that:

- The task group had looked at a wide spectrum of exploitation and not just modern slavery. The need for evidence had been highlighted in the task group report. Evidence could be collected at a local level.
- It was suggested that the Council had not acted until the issue was highlighted. It was further noted that it was important to learn the lessons of the past.
- It was suggested that a recent report on illegal migrants working illegally showed that the issue needed continued focus.

Councillor Bonham joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.

AGREED:

- 1) That the update be noted.
- 2) That a written response from the Executive be considered at the next meeting of the Commission.

185. 'ARC OF DEVELOPMENT' REGENERATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Director of Planning Development and Transport gave a presentation on Development Areas in the Heart of Leicester Plan. Key points to note were as follows:

- New housing developments were considered beneficial to Leicester's retail centre.
- A summary of developments within the arc was given as follows:
Waterside
 - The Waterside development was secured via a Compulsory Purchase Order.
 - The scheme had been under development for a decade and had reached a midway point.
 - Funding had largely come from central government funding of £25m.
 - £300m of private investment had been generated through the scheme.
 - The development included various types of buildings including

rental houses and houses for sale, student accommodation, private office space and leisure facilities.

- The scheme was nationally recognised for best practice and was referenced as a case study for devolution.
- The private sector was responding to emerging opportunities.
- Development was around half-way through completion.

East City

- St Margarets Bus Station had been a significant development for the city.
- Planning permission was secured for around 100 units at the newly obtained Corah site.
- Plans were underway for apartments in the Churchgate area.
- It was noted that there was currently a national hiatus in the apartment sector, with construction issues and industry costs cited as the main causes. A stock of schemes was awaited.

Lee circle

- Fleet House had been completed recently and provided housing accommodation. A second phase was well advanced.
- Student accommodation had been completed at the former International Hotel. It was noted that this would increase city footfall.
- The Phoenix extension was now complete with a rooftop garden.

St Georges

- The street pedestrian scheme and improvements to the highway scheme would aid regeneration of surrounding land.

In discussions with members, the following was noted:

- The Commission commended the success of the Waterside development and recognised the efforts to achieve pleasant aesthetics. It was noted that flooding measures had been a key design consideration.
- The Waterside compulsory purchase order was funded through the £25m government grant. The Council had been responsible for acquiring land, appointing a development partner and cost capping. The land was then sold to the developer at full market value.
- The matter of stalled apartment developments was a national issue which linked with Bond Markets.
- The Heart of Leicester Plan would help to increase investor confidence. Workspace investments gave a positive outlook.

- Proposals were in place with Homes England to draw down more housing funding.
- Waterside had created a mixed community and there was now a school in place.
- It was noted that a significant number of families were residing within the city centre. If demand for larger apartments were to emerge, development could be considered.
- Commission members raised highways issues around the areas of Frog Island and Woodgate. Investment into the green bus fleet was noted.
- Agencies preferred proposals with scope for large development.
- Work was still being considered within the Fosse Ward and conversations with landowners was ongoing. Compulsory Purchase Orders tended to be lengthy processes and required funding.

AGREED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

186. CYCLE TRACK DEMARCATION

The City Transport Director submitted a report to provide members of the commission with details on the processes to create a cycle track, and the usage of demarcation signage/lines/material and provide members of the commission with specific detail about the usage of concrete blocks as a protection measure for cycle tracks.

A presentation was given using the slides as attached with the agenda. Other key points included:

- On fully separated cycle tracks, delineation blocks had been installed so that visually impaired pavement-users were aware of them.
- Concrete blocks allowed for protection. The purpose of blocks and height-difference was to protect users.
- At a national and local level, many people had reported that they did not cycle due to concerns around the dangers posed by motor traffic. Division of cycle-tracks allowed people to cycle safely.
- Demarcation of cycle lanes/tracks also protected pedestrians from cyclists.
- The features on Aylestone Road were aimed to balance the costs involved as there were rules around how grants were used. Additionally, it had been necessary to retain the width of the road and to avoid impact on road traffic.
- A new crossing facility was being designed on Aylestone Road.

- Installation of cycle tracks/lanes did not require a Traffic Regulation Order unless they were contra-flow.

In discussions with Members, the following was noted:

- In response to queries about the suitability of concrete blocks and whether similar cycle tracks could be installed in other areas, such as Hinckley Road, it was explained that it was important that designs were suitable for the environments. It had been found that where designs had been forced in other areas of the country, it had not worked. The Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was being developed, and infrastructure and demand was being assessed and identified. A majority of those engaged with had expressed preferences for cycle tracks as they wanted the space. It was noted that whilst Hinckley Road was wide for most of its length, it did contain narrow areas and junctions, and it would be important to ensure that the road's capacity was not restricted. It was necessary to see how a system could fit and how it could be realised where there were conflicting priorities.
- With regard to concerns raised about cyclists not using cycle tracks, it was noted that cyclists had been engaged with on this as part of a consultation that would be brought back in the new year. It was suggested that some cyclists did not use the tracks as they needed to get somewhere that the track did not support (for instance, needing to turn right when a track did not allow). Additionally, there were safety concerns where tracks ran across driveways where there was poor visibility due to trees, and cyclists were concerned about cars backing out.
- It was important to understand that not all cyclists were of the same ability level and not all cycled with the same purpose.
- It was crucial to understand that the more extensive the network, the more people would cycle, which would mean fewer cars on the road. This had been supported by evidence nationally and internationally.
- In response to points made about the need to be pragmatic about what could and could not be done, and where adding cycle lanes/tracks would add value and the need for a mature model, it was noted that longer term-plans were being made and work would be proposed on this, but they would be dependent on grants as they were awarded for specific purposes.
- Issues with the cycle track on Beaumont Leys Lane could be discussed outside the meeting.
- It was necessary to look at issues on a network level.
- Concerns were raised regarding concrete blocks obstructing turning motorists. This would be considered by officers.
- Legal advice would be sought on the requirements for consultation on cycle lane/track instalment under government legislation.
- It was noted that a footpath could not be converted to a cycle track/lane

without creating a public bridleway.

- With regard to concerns raised about the sudden raise in kerbs on Aylestone Road, it was explained that the intention was that they were unidirectional, so this should avoid issues with oncoming cyclists. It was also explained that there was a slight slant on the cyclist side to give some protection. They could be examined for pedal impact and other signs that they had been a hazard.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

187. ZEV STRATEGY

The City Transport Director submitted a report and gave a presentation to provide members of the commission with an update on the council's Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy. Key points were included within the agenda pack.

In response to questions and comments raised by the Commission, it was noted that:

- Large power stations were identified as the most efficient means of generating electricity, and relevant research evidence would be supplied.
- Domestic charging often took place overnight for households with driveways. This created barriers and price disparities between households depending on access, domestic charging being the cheaper option. Quick charging alternatives and neighbourhood charging schemes could help.
- Research found that the majority of car purchases were for second hand vehicles. Availability of second-hand electric vehicles was increasing and this would in turn create more demand for charging.
- Other local authorities having invested in hydrogen fuelling had experienced issues with establishing infrastructures.
- Government strategy considered wider factors such as freight and rail services.
- The benefits of being a 'late adopter' were discussed to build upon the experience of others.
- Commission members suggested incentive options such as allowing electric vehicle users to access bus lanes, or to provide free parking at charging points.

AGREED:

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

188. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

189. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further items of urgent business, the meeting finished at 19:29.