



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Joel - Chair

Councillor Batool
Councillor Kitterick
Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Waddington

Councillor Dave
Councillor March
Councillor Porter
Councillor Zaman

In Attendance:

City Mayor – Sir Peter Soulsby
Deputy City Mayor – Councillor Cutkelvin
Assistant City Mayor - Councillor Sood (Online)

Youth Council Representatives:
Sarah Sampson Vincent
Eashan Naik
Muhammad Mahmood

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176. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pickering. She would join online.

177. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr Porter declared that he had an interest with regard to the Petitions Monitoring Report as he had been involved in the petition on Newarke Houses Museum.

Cllr Porter also declared that he had an interest in the item on the Contract Dispute Settlement. He had spoken to the press on the matter and had also

submitted a Freedom of Information request on the issue.

178. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

- 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.
- 2) That the minutes of the special meeting held on 10 November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

179. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair noted that actions were noted on the workplan.

No queries were made in respect of progress on actions agreed at the previous meeting.

180. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Chair noted that actions were noted on the workplan.

No queries were made in respect of progress on actions agreed at the previous meeting.

181. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATION AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations and statements of case had been submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

182. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

183. TRACKING OF PETITIONS - MONITORING REPORT

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which provided an update on the status of outstanding petitions against the Council's target of providing a formal response within three months of being referred to the Divisional Director.

- It was suggested that future reports could contain columns on whether Ward Councillors had been informed and whether they had responded.
- Clarification would be sought on whether amber petitions referred to three months since they were received or three months since they had been added to the report.
- In response to a query on the process for verifying signatories to an online Petition the Monitoring Officer explained that the process followed

is that which is laid out in the published Scheme and it was a matter for Council, if it wished at a future time, to revise the Scheme within the Constitution.

AGREED:

That the status of the outstanding petitions be noted, and to remove those petitions marked 'Petition Complete' Ref: from the report.

184. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR

The Chair invited members to raise questions for The City Mayor.

Councillor Waddington asked a question that she had submitted ahead of the meeting:

*I would like to ask the City Mayor if and when the flags attached to the Council's lamp posts will be removed.
Thank you*

The City Mayor responded:

- The flags were in the process of being removed as part of routine maintenance, with any posing a safety risk prioritised for urgent removal.
- Reporting and management of related issues had been handled effectively.

In response to a question from a Young People's Council (YPC) Representative, the following was noted in relation to engagement with the YPC:

- There was a commitment to make the experience more meaningful and to involve the Young People's Council more fully.
- The Executive were happy to meet with the Young People's Council to ensure their voices were better heard and to provide opportunities for direct representations.

The Chair suggested creating an organised timetable for the Young People's attendance at the Executive Briefing and to take an active part in senior recruitment processes.

The City Mayor responded:

- There had been occasions when the Young People's Council had been invited to be part of the recruitment process, and there was further scope for inclusion on decision making bodies.

- It would be more beneficial for the Council to meet young people in their own environment.

In response to a question from a YPC Representative, the following was noted in relation to young people's access to travel, particularly in the evenings:

- The City Council had ceased to operate a bus service, but there was a good working relationship with current operators.
- The City Mayor was aware though that many areas of the city did not get a service throughout the evening or available at weekends when young people wanted to use them for leisure purposes and this had been taken up with the operators.

The Assistant City Mayor for Environment and Transport added that:

- The new green buses had security cameras in place.
- Additional subsidies were being considered to make more travel more affordable for young people.
- There was a focus to increase bus usage across the city.

In response to a question from a YPC Representative, the following was noted in relation to High Street performance:

- The City Mayor understood the young people's concerns but felt that the City Centre remained vibrant. Whilst a decline was noted in some areas, others were regenerating.
- When compared with many other city centres, Leicester was attracting significant amounts of business, with far more openings of new shops than closures.
- A further dialogue with the young people was welcomed.

In response to a question from Councillor Porter, the following was noted:

- The City Mayor had written to Central Government requesting an amendment to housing legislation, specifically the rule that families must not remain in temporary accommodation for more than six weeks.

185. LGSCO REPORT OF MALADMINISTRATION CAUSING INJUSTICE (HOUSING) - MS X

The Director of Housing submitted a report following the request at Full Council

on 18 September 2025 that Overview Select Committee consider the Council's letter to the Secretary of State, together with his reply, in considering whether a payment should be made. The City Mayor's letter to the Right Honourable Steven Reed MP, Secretary of State, and the response from Alison McGovern MP, Minister of State, were appended to the report.

The Chair clarified that the Committee did not have decision-making power over this issue.

The City Mayor introduced the item and made the following points:

- The Council had been clear about the circumstances that they found themselves in, and in the response from the Minister it had been recognised that the Council had dealt with this effectively, noting that the numbers of families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation had fallen by 94.7% from June 2024 to June 2025 as the result of investment in providing alternatives.
- There was no intention on the part of Government to change the law. The 6-week target had been set and the Government would not want to relax that target.
- The Minister had been clear that the department did not interfere with the Ombudsman's investigations or how local authorities choose to respond to their findings.

In discussions with Elected Members, the following was noted:

- In response to a question on preventative measures and the accountability measures in place, it was noted that there was an aim to provide temporary accommodation that was fit for purpose. £45m had been invested in temporary accommodation, providing 350 home units, of which 242 were family homes. Data was being reviewed, and projections were being looked at to see what more could be done.
- Points were raised about the moral principle of the need to pay compensation, and it was moved to recommend that the case be settled in full.
- In response, it was noted that the injustice was recognised, however, the Ombudsman had recognised that suitable temporary accommodation had not been available in the City at that time. It was confirmed that there were now more options available. It was stressed that this was not a wilful mistake.
- The point was raised that private accommodation had been found, but the Council had refused to fund it.
- It was noted that law was not retrospective and if Regulations were broken two years ago, even if the Government were minded to change

the regulations, it would not apply in this case.

- It was noted that legislation dated from 2003, and that the housing crisis had developed and intensified since then, making it increasingly difficult for the authority to meet those standards. The request to Government asked them to recognise that the housing situation today was now very different.
- It was clarified that the decision on this matter was an Executive one, which had been taken and published, following which the Ombudsman had issued a second report which was reported to Full Council. The Ombudsman was expecting a final response.
- It was further noted that recommendations were not binding on the Executive, but if the Committee wished to move a recommendation for payment, it would be a matter for Scrutiny Members.
- In response to a query from a Young People's Council representative regarding vacant housing lets, it was confirmed that the vacancy rate remained well below the industry benchmark of 2%, despite Covid-related challenges. A fuller discussion could be held with the Young People's Council and the Housing Scrutiny Commission could also address queries.

Councillor Kitterick moved that the Committee recommend that the case be settled in full.

This was seconded by Cllr Porter and upon being put to the vote the motion was DEFEATED.

AGREED

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

186. MID-YEAR REVIEW OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2025/26

The Director of Finance submitted a report reviewing how the Council conducted its borrowing and investments during the first six months of 2025/26.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- In response to a question on the Threadneedle property fund, it was explained that this was not a short-term investment, and value was expected to increase over a long period.
- In response to a request for an example of where losses had been substantially mitigated, it was explained that there had been very few losses, but investments could go both up and down. Safe investments were sought by the Council for a positive return. Property funds would

be expected to recover over time.

- It was clarified that the outstanding loans for 2024 in the report was a typographical error, this should have read 2025.
- In response to queries about the property fund, the Council had been transparent that the value was lower at the end of September than the initial investment.
- It was noted that the arena was still in arrears, as had been previously reported to the Committee, but there was no information to suggest that the next pay-date would not be achieved.
- In response to a request for clarification on planned borrowing, it was explained that the Council had been borrowing for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Affordable Homes Programme using Council money to balance the general fund. As reserves went down on the general fund, it had been necessary to borrow to keep cash at the correct level to pay for services. The timing of the borrowing had been managed around interest rates and forecasts. It had been aimed to minimise borrowing until interest rates decreased. When the general fund budget was set at council, some of the capital programme had been switched from being funded by revenue to being funded by borrowing and it was necessary to take this borrowing out as the money was spent.
- In response to a query from a Young People's Council Representative, it was suggested that training sessions could be offered to the Young People's Council Representatives on treasury management.
- In response to a further query, figures on how much was paid to financial advisors would be sought.

AGREED

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

187. INCOME COLLECTION APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2025

The Director of Finance submitted a report detailing progress made in collecting debts raised by the Council during the first six months of 2025-26, together with debts outstanding and brought forward from the previous year. It also sets out details of debts written off under delegated authority that have not been possible to collect at reasonable effort and expense.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments. Key points included:

- In response to a question about business rates, it was explained that business rates were a nationally-set. It was difficult to prevent debts around business rates, but businesses we do work with businesses to manage arrears.
- In response to questions about discretionary tax relief, it was noted that

in the first two quarters the Council had spent £470k on Council Tax discretionary relief to 855 households. A full year would be needed to see the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme. At the end of the financial year information would be produced on the effect of the Council Tax Support Scheme. A breakdown could also be produced looking at patterns in the characteristics of the households being supported.

- With regard to collecting debt from people described as 'untraceable', it was explained that every effort was made to trace them. In some cases, these people had moved abroad, and the Council had access to credit agencies to ascertain where they had moved to.
- Information would be sought as to whether there was a national organisation or any local government coordination, perhaps through the DVLA on tracing vehicles which had incurred parking fines.
- Information could be produced in the next report on untraceable debt.
- With regard to outstanding debt, most of this was Council Tax and Business Rates paid over 10-12 months.
- Parking fine collection had been brought back in-house. This would need time to come through and would be revisited.
- Parking fine recovery had been reviewed to ascertain whether more could be done. The review showed that the methods used were very similar to those used by companies. An increase had been seen when the function was brought in-house.
- It was suggested that it was important for the proportion of outstanding debt written off to be considered.
- In response to a question over how long the write-off process took, it was noted that it depended on the circumstances and timings.

AGREED

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

188. EXECUTIVE DECISION CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2025/26

The Director of Finance submits a report to present the position of the capital programme for 2025/26 as at the end of September 2025.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- In response to a query about the need to close the gap in capital receipts, it was noted that a report had been brought to the Committee with a clear list and methodology. £35m was with legal and the remainder was being negotiated and reviewed.
- In response to queries about the railway station, it was noted that no Council money had been spent so far. Whilst there had been a delay,

there was confidence that the scheme could be delivered, timescales depended on how quickly assurance could be received from central government. The Committee could be updated on this in the new year.

- It was added in response to a question from a Young People's council representative that the use of the entrance area for leisure use would hopefully be appealing to young people.
- Information could be provided on the £150k for Community Asset Transfer.

AGREED

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

189. EXECUTIVE DECISION- REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2025/26

The Director of Finance submitted a report a report updating the forecasts presented to the committee in September 2025.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- It was confirmed that it was proposed to bring forward a £1m of the planned saving for 2026/27 into 2025/26.
- The upcoming report on recruitment was discussed, it would be moved forward outside of the meeting.
- There was an overall underspend of £1.4m.
- In response to points made about the precept in Adult Social Care, it was noted that the department had struggled with correct predictions on Integrated Care Board (ICB) contributions. There was also a series of joint funding with the ICB, and the practice had changed which had worked well and was within the 2% tolerance. The reason for the good performance was due to increasing health contributions from Continuing Care and Section 117. It would become more difficult in future and there were substantial targets in Health and Social Care in terms of expenditure. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland target was no more than £80m deficit on the budget, so there was pressure. In addition to this, changes in the NHS next year would add difficulty in achieving the level of income. There had been an issue in obtaining the volume of staff and there were many vacancies, however, vacancy levels were being taken and money was being used to expand the number of posts with the aim to bid for a higher volume of staffing, so staffing would be higher.
- It was added that Social Care in general was 70% of the total spend, and in previous years had the additional precept which went a small way towards the 70%.

AGREED

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

190. PRIVATE SESSION

MOVED:

That the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following reports in accordance with by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 because they involve the likely disclosure of 'exempt' information, as defined in the Paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and taking all the circumstances into account, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the information as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

Paragraph 5

Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

AGREED by majority (6 for, 1 against, 1 abstention)

191. CONTRACT DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

This item was discussed in private by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 Paragraphs 3 and 5, as indicated above.

192. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee was asked to consider the current work programme and to make comments and/or amendments as it considered necessary.

AGREED:

That the current work programme be noted.

193. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and other officers.

There being no other items of urgent business, the meeting closed at 9:20pm