



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: MONDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2026 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Joel - Chair

Councillor Batool	Councillor Dave
Councillor Kitterick	Councillor March
Councillor O'Neill	Osman
Councillor Pickering	Councillor Porter
Councillor Rae Bhatia	Councillor Waddington
Councillor Zaman	

In Attendance:

City Mayor – Sir Peter Soulsby
Deputy City Mayor – Councillor Cutkelvin
Assistant City Mayor – Councillor Whittle

Young People's Council Representative - Rebecca

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194. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present. No apologies for absence were made.

195. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

There were no declarations of interest at this stage; however, during the Housing Revenue Account Budget item, Cllr Kitterick declared an interest in relation to discussion of the St Peter's Boiler House.

196. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- It was requested that the recording of the meeting of the 1st December be checked regarding discussion on value of land per square metre.
Following the meeting the recording was checked, and the minutes are

correct, as it was stated at the meeting that land value had been said to vary throughout the city.

- A recommendation was queried from the meeting of the 1st December for members to receive the customer satisfaction report. It was confirmed that this was awaited for the following year.

AGREED:

- 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2025 and the be confirmed as a correct record.
- 2) That the minutes of the special meeting held on 3 December 2025 and the be confirmed as a correct record.

197. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reminded members in relation to the role of scrutiny being a place of challenge, with respect.

198. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Chair noted that members had been updated via email on progress on previous actions from the meetings on 1st and 3rd December.

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

199. 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.

200. PETITIONS

Cllr Dave presented the below petition on behalf of Cllr Singh Patel:

"We, the residents of Arbour Road, are facing ongoing and increasing difficulties with parking on our street. Day by day, it has become harder for households to find safe and convenient parking near their homes.

Many nearby streets in our area already operate under a Resident Parking Permit scheme. Because of this, a large number of non-residents are choosing to park on Arbour Road instead, creating significant congestion and leaving local residents without available parking spaces.

This situation is causing daily stress and inconvenience for families,

elderly residents, carers, and working people who depend on accessible parking close to their homes.

Therefore, we the undersigned respectfully request that the Council introduce a Household Resident Parking Permit Scheme for Arbour Road.

This will help to:

- Ensure residents can park safely near their homes*
- Reduce congestion caused by non-resident long-stay parking*
- Bring fairness and consistency with neighbouring streets*
- Improve overall traffic management and community wellbeing*

We kindly ask the Council to review this matter urgently and take action to support the residents of Arbour Road.”

201. 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.

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- One petition was highlighted as red.
- It was noted that with the sad passing of Cllr Sood, Assistant City Mayor - Community Cohesion, the petition she had been working on would be reallocated to councillors.
- Members sought clarification on completed petitions such as Spinney Hill and Troon, and the Assistant City Mayor for Environment and Transport explained that for completed petitions, while officers had given their consideration and responded to the submitters with recommended actions, the associated works might still be outstanding. Ward Councillors were notified on the petition status. Ward Councillor Cllr Batool gave members an update on works for the petitions mentioned. Work was due to be carried out and residents were noted to be satisfied.
- Cllr Dave had raised a question about works on Oakland Avenue at the last meeting. The Assistant City Mayor for Environment and Transport agreed to come back to him with an update.
- Members requested further clarification on the petitions procedure.

AGREED:

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

202. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR

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

The Chair accepted questions to be asked to the City Mayor.

- 1) Cllr Pickering had submitted a detailed question on maintenance works at the Haymarket. The following shortened version was asked at the meeting:

The Haymarket Theatre is a one of the most visible points in Leicester city centre. The prolonged disrepair of the escalators has caused ongoing accessibility issues for shoppers. Long waits for the lift could deter shoppers from going upstairs.

Can the City Mayor set tell me why they have not been repaired and if there are plans for repairs. This looks bad for our city as the Haymarket is one of our longest standing shopping centres.

The City Mayor replied that:

- The works were scheduled to commence next month and would take around a month to complete.
 - Asset managements were in place for the wide range of council buildings.
 - The Haymarket was part of the Corporate Estate and investment would continue.
- 2) Cllr Porter asked a question relating to a Freedom of Information request on the X Ltd case. It was confirmed that the outcome of the request would be relayed to him.

AGREED:

- 1) That the responses to the questions raised be noted.
- 2) The outcome of the Freedom Of Information request be relayed to Cllr Porter.

203. CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - LGSCO MALADMINISTRATION REPORT - MR X

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report informing the Commission that the Executive decision taken by the Deputy City Mayor for Housing on the 9th January 2026 relating to a LGSCO Maladministration report had been the subject of a 5-member call-in under the procedures at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules, of the Council's Constitution.

The Committee was recommended to either:

- a) Note the report without further comment or recommendation. *(If the report was noted the process would continue and the call in would be considered at a future meeting of Full Council);* or
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in. *(If comments were made the*

process would continue and the comments and call in would be considered at a future meeting of Full Council); or

c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn (If the committee wished for there to be no further action on the call-in, then they must have actively withdrawn it. If withdrawal was agreed the call-in process would stop, the call-in would not be considered at a future meeting of Full Council and the original decision would take immediate affect without amendment).

The Chair clearly outlined the process that she would follow in determining how to resolve the call-in.

The Chair invited the proposer, Councillor Porter to present the call-in. The following points were given:

- The ombudsman reviewed cases individually and there was no evidence that this case could set a precedent for escalating other cases.
- In terms of cost, the £3,525 was relatively small compared with amounts spent on other cases.
- The council had a responsibility to rectify any mistakes it made.
- A homeless family with children could not afford legal representation, making the Ombudsman their only option. Under the Equality Act, the council was obliged to protect vulnerable individuals.
- Not acting on the Ombudsman's recommendations could send a strong message and risk negative perception of The Council.
- A further ombudsman report would likely ensue with a recommendation to take the matter to Full Council.

The Chair invited the seconder Cllr Rae Bhatia to add comment. Key points made were as follows:

- Members were urged to support the call-in.
- It was imperative to maintain the reputation of the council.

The Chair invited the Deputy City Mayor for Housing, Economy and Neighbourhoods, The Director of Housing and the Head of Service for Housing to respond. A presentation was given (slides attached) and the following additional points raised:

- It was not uncommon for both central government and councils to decline ombudsman recommendations.
- The council recognised the effects that limited access to suitable housing on individuals and families.
- It was essential for the Commission to consider the complaints within the context of the national housing crisis.
- Wider socio-economic factors had influenced matters for the family.
- At the outset of the case, use of bed and breakfasts / hotels was an emerging trend for temporary accommodation, pressures and demands on the local authority were changing.
- Comparisons were being made with the case of X, but it was noted that one involved a legal settlement to protect the council, while the other related to an

ombudsman recommendation that was considered likely to impact the council's ability to address the wider housing crisis.

The Chair asked if the proposer wished to withdraw the call-in. It was noted that the proposer wished for the call-in to proceed.

The Chair invited member discussion, key points to note were as follows:

- Members emphasised the importance of distinguishing between accountability and liability. Lessons had been learnt, but factors had been outside of local authority control.
- At a time of financial pressure, sustainability was a key and appropriate precedents needed to be set.
- Members referenced metrics which highlighted the health impact for children living in temporary accommodation.
- In response to a query about providing solutions for larger families, it was noted that 160 new family units would be created, comprising of 2 and 5 bedroom temporary accommodation units.
- Mechanisms were now in place to prevent miscommunications from temporary housing offers to tenants.
- The matter was expected to return via the ombudsman, and executive consideration would then be undertaken.

Cllr O'Neil moved that, following the points raised during the meeting, the call-in be withdrawn. This was seconded by Cllr March and upon being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That the call-in be withdrawn.

204. WORKFORCE AND RESOURCING

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report to provide a broad outline of the workforce challenges that Local Authorities, including Leicester Face. The item had come to OSC following previous discussion at scrutiny. The report provided context, offered a deeper dive into the challenges of recruiting to social care, and explained changes to People Services, it was taken as read.

In response to member discussion, the following was noted:

- A number of member questions had been submitted which were awaiting a formal response.
- It was noted that vacancy rates across the whole workforce would be refined and more effectively reported under the new structure.
- In term of staff wellbeing, it was noted that exit interviews were optional, a more granular understanding of workforce wellbeing would come from the Healthy Workplace Survey. Members requested that the survey results be known.
- Benchmarking data was included in the report, and HR work was ongoing to identify areas of success and areas for improvement in staff satisfaction.

- Questions raised relating to social work caseloads could come back to scrutiny.
- Umbrella rates work had examined agency staff costing and overall benefits were shown. Further global analysis could be useful.
- Regarding the Social Work Academy, it was explained that a single, city-wide career pathway from education to leadership had been created. Apprenticeship pathways showed stronger retention than university entrants.
- Multi-disciplinary work was in place within Children In Need services. A new system to allow for more controlled caseloads was being piloted.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 3) Written responses would be provided to member questions.
- 4) The findings of Healthy Workplace Survey would be considered by the Committee once the timeframe was known.
- 5) The impact of recruitment work would be brought to ASC and CYPE, including caseloads for social workers.
- 6) Benchmarking information would be included in next report.

Cllr Osman left during consideration of item.

205. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET (INCLUDING CAPITAL PROGRAMME) 2026/27

The Director of Housing submitted a report setting out the City Mayor's proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2025/26 prior to it being considered at Full Council on 19th February 2025. An overview of the report was given.

In response to member discussion, the following was noted:

- The report set out climate commitments and outlined actions. The most recent tranche of new builds were A-rated. Funding was subject to match-funding requirements.
- It was confirmed that in relation to Recommendation vi, the City Mayor had the authority to decrease service charges, proposals to increase the charges were referred to Full Council.
- The St Peter's Boiler House chimney was confirmed to be structurally sound.
- District heating schemes would be subject to applicable Ofgem regulatory arrangements.
- Cost modelling for Climate Ready Leicester was beyond the scope of the report and could be discussed separately.
- The consultation on proposed rent increases highlighted concerns about the wider cost of living.

- The Tenants Scrutiny Panel had scrutinised service charges, and there was a commitment to agree a programme of items for review over the next 12 months, with regular feedback to the Panel.
- Members could refer individual casework to the Director of Housing.

AGREED

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the recommendations for Full Council be noted by the committee.
- 3) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 4) For recommendation vi to be amended to state that the City Mayor had authority to decrease charges only, and for this to be noted.

Cllr Kitterick declared an interest during the item regarding the St Peter's Boiler House.

206. DRAFT GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the City Mayor's proposed Draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2026/27.

It was noted that cost mitigating work had been undertaken in social care, and it was suggested to roll this into a third year as it had been very successful.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments, the following was noted:

- With regard to queries about the recommendations made by the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission, it was noted that comments from the commissions were collated, and it was up to the City Mayor if they were incorporated in the budget.
- In response to queries about figures that were not yet available, it was noted that these figures would be updated and members would be made aware of their implications. It was further clarified that with relation to Core Spending Power, this included Council Tax rises, and did not take inflation or cost pressures into account. It was noted that government money would help, but it would not prevent the Council from going into reserves over the next four years and spending more than its income.
- It was further added that Core Spending Power increases quoted by Government were based on the 2024/25 financial year, and some of these increases had already been built into the strategy. It was also noted that some of the increase was due to the recognition of the deprivation in the City, deprivation also links to additional costs.
- With regard to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it was

acknowledged that there would be initial costs, but these would be offset by savings and the payback was quick. It was added that the government had confirmed that they expected existing council budgets to fund LGR.

- With regard to underspend in Adult Social Care (ASC), it was explained that this was often in relation to vacancies, and income came from the NHS for package costs.
- It was further noted with regard to ASC that contracts with providers had an annual increase to take account in rises in the national living wage. Significant improvements had been made in 2025/26, and package costs had been brought down.
- In response to points made about providing resources for Adventure Playgrounds, it was noted that the City Mayor had been meeting with five of them and the issues they faced included issues around tenure and land and they were looking for ways to be more sustainable.
- In response to points made on the reliance on reserves, it was explained that it was necessary to work to a balanced income and expenditure budget, and this was always the target. The Council had a budget strategy that did not need capital receipts or a capitalisation directive. There had been lower use of reserves than last year, so the approach was working.
- In response to points made on the ASC precept, it was explained that the ASC precept this year had been £3.5m, but growth had been £13m, so the increase had not been covered.

A recommendation was **MOVED** by Cllr Kitterick and **SECONDED** by Cllr Waddington that the provision of resources to allow the sustainable continuation of the Adventure Playground network.

Upon being put to the vote, the recommendation was **AGREED**.

The City Mayor committed to update members on this before Full Council.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the recommendations for Full Council be noted by the committee.
- 3) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 4) OSC recommended that it would like the provision of resources to allow for the sustainable continuation of the Adventure Playground network.

Councillor Kitterick left the meeting following the consideration of this item.

207. DRAFT THREE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the City Mayor's proposed Draft Three-Year Capital Programme 2026/27.

The report was taken as read.

Members were invited to ask questions and make comments. The following was noted:

- The introduction of Council Tax for empty but furnished properties was welcomed.
- In response to a query surrounding the borrowing of money for capital projects and using revenue costs for debt, it was clarified that capital receipts were not needed for capitalisation and could therefore be used for reducing borrowing costs. Capital financing within the revenue budget includes borrowing costs.
- Money had been set aside for the demolition of Rally House.
- £50m had been set aside with a focus on family accommodation based on the modelling projection for growth. It was noted that Leicester City Council were ahead of other authorities on this. Officers were praised for the work done to drive down the need for temporary accommodation.
- With regard to a query on savings on hotel costs, this was difficult to quantify, however, the £45m programme had saved £47m over three years and it was expected for a similar outcome from the £50m programme.
- The importance of spending money on essential services first was raised.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the recommendations for Full Council be noted by the committee.
- 3) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

Councillors Porter and Waddington left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

208. TREASURY & INVESTMENT STRATEGIES 2026/27

The Director of Finance submitted a report outlining the Treasury & Investment Strategies for 2026/27.

It was explained that this report set out how money was managed over the year.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the recommendations for Full Council be noted by the committee; and
- 3) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

209. 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.

210. 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 9.15pm

Housing's Response to LGSCO Findings – Mr X

January 2026

Minute Item 203

Key LGSCO Findings

June 2023 to July 2024

- Mr X complained that the Council incorrectly said he declined a property **not investigated by LGSCO**
- Council completed timely housing needs assessments on two occasions and decided on duty owed **No Fault Found**
- Mr X's complaint that the Council failed to provide accommodation for a 3-day period **No Fault Found**

Faults Found

- Delayed review of personalised housing plan (PHP) Failure to notify Mr X's right to review suitability of his temporary accommodation
- Delays in decision to award main housing duty
- Communicating poorly about Mr X's housing status
- Failure to move customer to self-contained accommodation after 6 weeks in B&B accommodation

LGSCO Recommendations

- Written apology to Mr X for the faults identified **Completed**
- Symbolic payment of £500 to acknowledge the distress caused by the failures **In Progress**
- Council to consider at its full Council, Cabinet, or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members **Completed**
- LGSCO satisfied the Council has already agreed to service improvements to eliminate the use of B&B accommodation for families therefore not repeated those recommendations **No Further Action Required**
- To make a symbolic payment of £3,525 due to the B&B stay for 42 weeks longer than the family should have. Calculated at £150 a week from entry to B&B until the Council made an offer of accommodation in November 2023 (5 weeks in total) and £75 per week from 7 November 2023 to 29 July 2024 (37 weeks in total) **Not Agreed**

Council's Response

- Accepted failings and learnings from this case and ongoing actions to implement the strategic and operational learning
- Acknowledged the difficulties faced by homelessness families & Councils moral responsibilities and legal duties
- Accommodation requirement was for a large family 5/6 bed – limited availability
- Private Rented offer in Nov 2023 could have ended the ongoing stay in B&B by 37 weeks if accepted by the family
- Historical issues around resourcing, capacity and staff retention during this period, growing the team to fix this
- Unprecedented demand for Housing, Council declared Housing Crisis, this continues to be a national pressure, large Investments to tackle Homelessness in Leicester
- Considered complying with all recommendations except for £3,525 due to B&B stay & respectfully challenge this recommendation

Councils Reasons for Non-payment

- Acknowledged the Regulations dated 2003 which render accommodation beyond 6 weeks as unsuitable, legislation dates back 20 years
- Geopolitical context has changed since including policies made by multiple different Govts including MHCLG & Home Office
- National crisis including the impact of international forces beyond LA control, penalty deemed unfair to LA and the taxpayers of Leicester
- Local demand has increased by 219% in the last decade
- Other complainants seeking compensation similarly to this case may lead to unbalanced budgets. Over the last 12 months, the estimated cost to the Council would be in the region of £250k
- Nationally, the estimated cost could equate to £6-£7m
- Risks this would contribute to the serving of S114 causing detrimental impact and loss of services for the local people of Leicester
- Unprecedented overdemand for housing and systemic shortage of housing – this is a national crisis
- Council is investing tens of millions to fix the problem, exposing LAs to pay 000s in compensation may set-back plan to fix wider problems

Publication

- Decision date 9th October 2025, published on LGSCO website
- Formally published a public interest report on 6th November 2025 resulting in promotion within the media
- Articles in various media outlets
- Council placed two public notices in the newspaper and website to inform of the LGSCO report and findings
- Hard copies of the report were made available for public inspection at City Hall with options to take extractions from report and copies supplied free of charge

Overall Compliance with LGSCO

- In 2024/25, LGSCO dealt with 118 complaints from the Councils various divisions not just Homelessness. From a total of 23 investigations, 17 were upheld in the complainant's favour.

Not for LGSCO	Assessed & Closed	Investigated	Total
28	67	23	118
Upheld	Average	Adjusted for LCC Population	
17 from 23 74%	Compares to an average of 80% in similar Authorities	4.5 upheld decisions per 100,000 residents in Leicester. Average for Unitary Authorities is 5.3 upheld per 100,000	

- We have identified 8 from total above were linked to Homelessness and 5 out of 8 were not investigated. Housing always complies with compensation amounts and recommended actions where fault is identified
- In the case of Mr X, our partial disagreement with a recommendation reasons as explained within the report
- This data does not include Housing Ombudsman complaints.

LGSCO Power & Legal Position

- LGSCO can recommend but does not have the power to compel compliance.
- Monitoring Officer under a duty to prepare report for the Executive to consider and to formally reply.
- LGSCO may issue a further adverse report.
- If so, such report must be considered by Full Council.
- It must also be subject to publicity.

National Homelessness Pressures

- **In December 2024**
- **127,890** Households in Temporary Accommodation,
- From the above number, **14,250** were in B&B accommodation and **2,070** of those were family households with children over the statutory limit of 6 weeks
- Locally we have **13** households in B&B over 6 weeks compared to 188 in July 2024 – **93% reduction**
- There is a chronic housing shortage across the UK including affordable housing, supply of housing not keeping up with demand
- Government aiming to build 1.5m homes over the current parliament but significant challenges due to existing planning system, shortage of skilled workers construction sector and cost of living impacting the price of materials

Increasing Temporary Accommodation

- Decision - March 2024 to invest £45m in Temporary Accommodation delivery of 135 family temporary accommodation properties and 118 single temporary accommodation units
- 125 new leases
- Additional Homelessness Prevention officer and other staff to strengthen services

- Proposal for a further £50m to be invested in 250 further self contained Temporary accommodation properties (160 family/90 single)
- &Additional Homelessness Prevention officer and other staff to strengthen services



Increasing Affordable Housing

- Between 2019/20 and 2022/23 a total of 1,080 properties were delivered to tackle the housing crisis in Leicester
- Further plans to increase affordable housing in Leicester by 1,520 units
- Delivered 165 units in 2023/24
- On track to deliver 1,500 permanent new Affordable homes

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
165	424	440	471	1,500

Homelessness Pressures - Mitigations

- Strong prevention rates to avoid people facing Homelessness
- £45m spent delivering 135 family TA properties and 118 Single TA properties
- £50m proposed to deliver 250 Self Contained TA properties (160 family/90 single)
- Ongoing allocation of 40% of all HRA Housing to Homelessness cohort
- Bigger PRS scheme to deliver 500 PRS lets up from (240) in 25/26
- LCC Acquisitions and New Build Housing alongside RP deliver set to deliver 1,500 permanent Affordable Homes
- Seeking to secure over £48m from Homes England of Affordable Housing funding to deliver more permanent homes
- Working to prepare Non-Strategic Local Plan sites to deliver over 600 units of Affordable housing in conjunction with RPs