



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2026 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Waddington – Chair
Councillor Cassidy – Vice-Chair

Councillor Agath
Councillor Gopal
Councillor Porter

Councillor Clarke
Councillor Orton

In Attendance:

City Mayor – Sir Peter Soulsby
Assistant City Mayor – Councillor Geoff Whittle

Also Present:

Adele Toussain – Young People's Council Member
Dena Al-Showali – Young People's Council Member

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232. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Rae Bhatia – Cllr Gopal substituted.

Apologies were received from Cllr Osman – Cllr Orton substituted.

233. 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 helped to word the Call-in on the Market Redevelopment.

234. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commissions held on 22nd April 2026 and 6th August 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.

235. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed members of the Young People's Council to the meeting.

The Chair added that the Call in of the Market Development decision had been taken as a late item of urgent business.

236. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

237. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

238. YOUNG PERSONS BUS TRAVEL

The City Transport Director submitted a report to the commission on the work done to date regarding young person's bus travel. Highlighting initiatives both local and national and the next stages of work.

Members of the Young People's Council (YPC) attended the meeting to share their views.

Key points included:

- The City Transport Director thanked the YPC members for their previous contributions and for their work on the survey which had been very helpful.
- Since the previous discussion on the issue, there had been a commitment to look at the measures discussed. Some of these had been able to be launched. The Flexi Fare cap now meant it was the cheapest day fare available. Additionally, the cost of student tickets had allowed cheaper access to education and meant that there was no need to purchase an annual ticket.
- The change in national government had led to schemes coming forward such as the £2 bus fare cap, and the extension of the 16-17 Railcard to be valid a year from purchase, even if the person turns 18 during that time. The Railcard also gave a discount on Flexi Fare but tickets.
- There were still commitments to address, and work was ongoing with bus operating companies and the government, lobbying for national fare initiatives and looking for opportunities for grant funding.
- It was necessary to look at the impact of the £2 fare cap, looking at the impact

of the bus market and the levels of fares and subsidies.

- There would be further engagement with YPC members.

The Chair raised that it had been requested that officers look into affordable options for reduced bus fares for young people over 16.

The City Transport Director explained that the options that had been brought in were the options that were found to be viable and affordable, such as the Flexi Fare cap and the reduction of student tickets.

The YPC members shared their views on the issue. Key points included:

- Issues were raised surrounding frequency and reliability, and it was noted that sometimes the times on the website and those at the bus stop were inconsistent.
- Officers were thanked for what had been done so far, especially regarding the free August bus travel. It was enquired as to whether this could be extended to other holidays.
- The cumulative cost of travel for families with multiple children was highlighted as a particular concern.
- Concern was raised surrounding the safety of young people on buses and ways to report Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- Cleanliness issues were raised.
- It was suggested that adult fares should begin at 18 rather than 16.

In response to the points raised by the YPC members, the City Transport Director noted that:

- Issues surrounding bus times would be picked up with the team. In theory the times should work from the same data set and printed timetables should only be changed twice a year.
- The free August bus travel was a government initiative, but the Department for Transport (DfT) would look at the impact for future consideration. It was hoped that Local Authorities could contribute to initiatives.
- With regard to fares, there was a family flexi ticket, but this didn't cover all routes or necessarily reflect the nature of families. It was suggested that with the fare cap, group tickets may not necessarily be economic.
- Age boundaries were an issue for the bus operators, and they would need to agree, but the Council were in conversation with them as a partnership.
- Cleanliness issues were flagged with operators as there was a minimum standard to maintain.
- With regard to passenger safety, it was important to recognise that there were obligations, and the Council were working with government guidance. Additionally, operators were worked with, and it was expected to see progress in the future as training was rolled out to drivers.

In response to member discussion and questions, the following was noted:

- In response to queries about the costs to the Council of the schemes asked for by the YPC members, including the reduction of the student ticket, it was explained that it was all funded by the government grant project. The costs of what was requested by the YPC members was variable, and the lowest

possible fares that were affordable to the Council had been found. Modelling had been done to work through costs. Models had been looked at nationally and applied to the level of usage in Leicestershire to establish a ballpark cost. This could be shared with the Commission.

- The issue of those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) was raised, and it was suggested that assistance with bus fares could help them to participate in opportunities. It was suggested that this could be looked at in a future meeting.
- It was uncertain at this point as to whether the Flexi Fare ticket would be impacted by the £2 bus fare cap. The cap would be introduced in January to it would be monitored from January to April to ascertain as to whether the Flexi Fare was still giving value.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.
- 3) That a report come back to the Commission to include information on the discussions between the Council and the bus operators on safety, cleanliness and reliability as well as the figures on costs and usage.

239. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to an agenda variation. Any Other Business: Call-in of Executive Decisions Leicester Market Redevelopment was taken prior to the Local Transport 2027/28 Programme.

The Chair announced that under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 4E Rule 15, she had agreed to accept the following item on the Call-in of a decision relating to Leicester Market due to the timings of the next scheduled meeting.

240. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION - LEICESTER MARKET REDEVELOPMENT

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report informing the Commission that an executive decision taken by the City Mayor on 13 August 2026 relating to Leicester Market 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 Chair clearly outlined the process that she would follow in determining how to resolve the call-in. The Commission was recommended to either:

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

considered at 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 actively withdraw it. If withdrawal was agreed the call-in process stops, the call-in would not be considered at Full Council and the original decision takes immediate effect without amendment).

The proposer of the call-in, Councillor Kitterick, was not present. Councillor Porter, as one of the signatories to the call-in, presented the case.

The following points were raised:

- Support was expressed for Leicester Market and its long-term success, recognising its importance as one of the oldest markets in the country.
- Concerns were raised regarding a lack of clarity about the final vision for the market and whether the redevelopment would ultimately deliver the intended outcomes.
- It was acknowledged that archaeological discoveries had delayed the project and that Leicester's heritage should be preserved. However, questions were raised regarding the impact of those delays on project costs and the potential for further budget increases.
- Clarification was sought regarding the original project budget, the amount allocated for archaeology, the extent of borrowing required, the financial impact of delays and the measures in place to control future cost increases.
- Assurances were requested that taxpayers would receive value for money and that the additional expenditure would deliver tangible benefits to the overall scheme.
- Concerns raised by market traders were reported, including views that the original intention had been to improve existing market facilities rather than create a larger, more flexible open space.
- It was suggested that the archaeological expenditure should be subject to further scrutiny and that a detailed breakdown of costs be provided.
- Questions were raised as to whether the scale of the archaeological discoveries could reasonably have been anticipated given previous city centre redevelopment projects.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the overall cost of the scheme, its long-term financial implications and the adequacy of consultation undertaken with traders and stakeholders.

The Chair reminded Members that the call-in related specifically to the additional £1.9 million funding required for archaeological works and that wider matters concerning the future operation and design of the market would be considered through a separate report at a future meeting.

The Chair invited the City Mayor and the Strategic Director for City Development and Neighbourhood Services and Director of Tourism, Culture and Economy to respond.

The City Mayor and officers made the following points:

- Members had previously received detailed briefings regarding the archaeological discoveries and their impact on the redevelopment programme.
- Leicester Market had occupied the site for centuries and historically operated as a largely open market space, allowing flexibility for a range of uses and events.
- The existing covered structure had created an underused area outside market trading hours which had attracted anti-social behaviour. Significant support had been received from stakeholders and city centre groups for restoring the market to a more open and flexible layout.
- Initial archaeological investigations and professional advice indicated that only limited archaeological intervention would be required. However, extensive and significant archaeology had subsequently been uncovered resulting in a larger and more costly works than originally anticipated.
- The discoveries were of considerable historical significance and would contribute to a greater understanding of Leicester's heritage.
- The main archaeological excavation works had now been completed, and construction activity had resumed. Whilst no guarantees could be provided, the project remained on track for completion by December 2026.
- Temporary support measures including a rent-free period for traders, had been introduced during the redevelopment works.
- Feedback from traders had indicated a preference for returning trading activity to the market as quickly as possible and introducing additional permanent structures at this stage could result in further delays. The proposed layout would retain flexibility should decisions regarding permanent structures be considered in the future.
- Historical records, surveys and independent investigations undertaken before construction had not identified evidence of the extensive remains that were later discovered.
- The completed scheme was intended to deliver a food-led market, while maintaining a diverse range of traders and providing a flexible space capable of supporting a variety of activities and events.
- Expected benefits included increased trader occupancy and retention, greater visitor footfall and an enhanced offer and improved long-term

financial sustainability.

- Officers advised that the principal archaeological risks had now been addressed and that the additional funding was considered sufficient to complete the remaining works, although no major project could be entirely risk-free.
- Officers agreed to consider how further financial information relating to the archaeological expenditure could be provided to Members.

During discussion, Members sought clarification on a few points:

- Regarding the future mix of traders, support available to traders following redevelopment, the long-term economic sustainability of the market, the operation of demountable stalls and the distinction between temporary and permanent elements of the scheme.
- Concerns were also raised regarding anti-social behaviour, future project costs and the need for greater transparency regarding archaeological expenditure.

In response, the City Mayor:

- Confirmed that the market would be food-led rather than food-only, that demountable stalls would provide flexibility without necessarily being removed daily and that previous shipping container proposals related to the 12-20 Cank Street Link project rather than the market redevelopment.
- It was further stated that an open market layout would improve visibility and assist enforcement agencies in tackling anti-social behaviour.
- The City Mayor expressed willingness to provide further information but advised that referring the decision back for reconsideration would create further delays to the project and negatively impact traders.

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

RESOLVED:

That the call-in be withdrawn.

Councillor Orton left the meeting at 18.45pm.

241. LOCAL TRANSPORT 2027/28 PROGRAMME

The City Transport Director submitted a report to the Commission on the proposed transport capital works programme for the 2027 – 2028 financial year. The report details the Local Transport Grant, its requirements and aims make Members of the Commission aware of forthcoming opportunities to refresh ward priorities and feed into the programme.

In addition to the slides as attached with the agenda pack, other key points included:

- The scheme involved a significant amount of money across the city and there had been lots of investment in works across the city and in the neighbourhoods.
- Other surfacing works would take place, but the ones on the slide were the ones that had been identified at this time.
- Reactive maintenance took place to bring standards up.
- Every project needed to show to be beneficial.

In response to member questions and discussion, the following was noted:

- It was clarified that the £6.3m was only a capital allocation, although there was a revenue allocation that had been used for student and flexi fares.
- In response to a query on the pedestrian crossing on the junction between Welford Road and University Road, it was clarified that local people and the university had asked that a pedestrian phase be installed on University Road. It was further explained that in any schemes with traffic signals, area traffic control was worked with so people could cross where and when they needed to whilst still ensuring movement for vehicles.
- It was explained that many streets in the Cultural Quarter still needed maintenance on their surfaces. The plan for this could be shared with the Commission nearer the time.
- In response to a query on the costs surrounding the Beaumont Leys temporary scheme, it was acknowledged that costs could be extensive for such schemes, but the council were keen to deliver a solution that tied in with existing infrastructure. There were lots of active travel schemes, and resources were better directed to high-quality schemes designed to be of considerable value.
- In response to further comments on the Beaumont Leys temporary scheme, it was reported that it was currently in the very early stages. A topographical survey had been requested, and this would determine what could be done and how. Concept work and preliminary work would then be carried out, and Councillors would be worked with on what could be taken forward. Many variables still needed to be worked through, but a more detailed discussion could be had once more information was available.
- Responding to a query on parking in the Beaumont Leys scheme, it was too early to discuss specifics, but it was acknowledged that there was a level of parking and this would look to be retained as much as possible whilst staying safe.
- Reports from the public informed the Council on where road maintenance was needed. Additionally, there was a routine maintenance programme that was assessed on standards, and intervention would be made if needed. Work was undertaken when issues were raised and concerns raised through the Love Leicester process were triaged.
- In response to further queries on the crossing at the Welford Road/University Road junction, it was noted that area traffic control was still being worked with,

if it was a pedestrian phase, traffic would only be interrupted when people needed to cross. It was necessary to look at how it operated with the network. Both University Road and Welford road were seen as key for movement.

- The differences between the surfacing on Aylestone Road and University Road could be looked at.
- Information on carbon emissions from the works could be provided to the Commission upon request.
- In response to a request for information on cargo bikes, it was explained that the Council maintained a small fleet that were mostly available to officers for use as book-bikes or for transporting material for cycling initiatives. Costs must be taken into account. Ways to track them would be looked into. Further information could be provided to the commission upon request.
- It was clarified that bollards at bus stops were intended to prevent vehicles overtaking buses and preventing collisions.

AGREED:

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

242. WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that the work programme would be revisited in the new municipal year.

The work programme was noted.

The meeting finished at 19:22