



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST 2026 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Waddington (Chair)

Councillor Agath
Councillor Bonham

Councillor Porter
Councillor Clarke

Councillor Rae Bhatia

In Attendance:

Assistant City Mayor - Councillor Whittle
City Mayor - Sir Peter Soulsby

225. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies were received from the seconder to the Call-in Councillor Kitterick.

226. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

No declarations were made.

227. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION 2026-27

The membership of the Commission for 2026/27 was noted.

228. DATES OF MEETINGS FOR THE COMMISSION 2026-27

The Commission noted the meeting dates for the municipal year.

The Commission noted that an additional meeting may be required to consider issues relating to young people who are not in education, employment or

training (NEETs) as well as an update on the Market Place.

229. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Commission noted its Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix A.

The Chair raised concerns regarding response times to enquiries submitted by councillors on behalf of constituents. Members were advised that there is an expectation that officers respond within ten working days. However, this standard is not always achieved.

The Chair highlighted concerns regarding responses from some service areas including highways.

230. CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS: ST MARGARET'S JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT FUNDING AND LEICESTER RAILWAY STATION - FUNDING SUPPORT FROM DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report informing the Commission that the Executive Decision taken by the City Mayor on 22 July 2026 relating to St Margaret's Junction Improvement Funding and Leicester Railway Station Funding Support from the Department for Transport has been subject to a 5-member call-in under Rule 12 of Part 4D, the 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 from the below options to:

- a) Note the report without further comment or recommendation. (If the report is noted the process continues and the call in will be considered at a future meeting of Full Council); or
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in. (If comments are made the process continues and the comments and call in will be considered at a future meeting of Full Council); or
- c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn (If the committee wish for there to be no further action on the call-in, then they must actively withdraw it. If withdrawal is agreed the call-in process stops, the call-in will not be considered at a future meeting of Full Council and the original decision takes immediate affect without amendment).

The Chair invited the proposer of the call-in, Councillor Porter, to make their case. The following points were raised:

- Councillor Porter introduced the call-in and stated that the purpose of the Call-In was to seek greater transparency regarding the significant reduction in the funding requirement for the St Margaret's Junction scheme and the increased funding requirement for the Leicester Railway Station project.

- He questioned why the St Margaret's Junction scheme, which had previously formed part of a substantially larger Levelling Up Fund bid, could now be delivered for considerably less funding and sought clarification on whether any aspects of the original scheme had been removed or scaled back.
- He requested an explanation for the failure of the previous procurement exercise for the railway station project and sought assurances that revised procurement arrangements would reduce the risk of further delays and cost increases.

The City Mayor responded advising the commission with the following points:

- The Leicester Railway Station was a major gateway to the city but was currently inadequate in meeting the needs of passengers and visitors.
- Delivering the project has required extensive collaboration between the Council, Government, Network Rail and other rail industry partners.
- Progress had been affected by the complexity of bringing together multiple stakeholders and agreeing a scheme that could be delivered.
- The revised St Margaret's junction proposal represented a more practical and achievable solution than previous options.
- Improvements around the station would be better integrated with the surrounding transport infrastructure.

The City Transport Director and the Development Team Programme Manager delivered a presentation outlining the background to both schemes as attached with the minutes and responded to the specific issues raised within the call-in notice:

- Regarding St Margaret's Junction, members heard that the original Levelling Up Fund submission in 2022 had been produced within a short timescale and was developed as a concept proposal.
- Subsequent design work, traffic modelling and review by highways, traffic control and public transport teams had identified that elements of the original model could adversely affect congestion levels and bus access to St Margaret's Bus Station.
- Members were advised that the revised scheme retained lane capacity whilst continuing to deliver the key objectives of infilling the subways, improving pedestrian and cycle facilities, enhancing public realm around St Margaret's Church and supporting bus movements. As a result, the overall estimated cost had reduced significantly from the original estimate.

The following points were raised by members:

- Members questioned the reduced costs associated with the projects and sought assurances that the revised scheme would still deliver meaningful transport, environmental and regeneration benefits. Officers stated that the revised scheme was considered more deliverable, retained the principal outcomes of the

original proposal and reflected the current traffic conditions and operational requirements.

- In relation to Leicester Railway Station, Members sought clarification regarding the failure of the previous procurement exercise. Officers explained that the project had been competing for contractor interest during a period when the rail construction market prioritised other major national infrastructure schemes. Feedback received from contractors also identified concerns regarding programme timescales and uncertainty around the temporary works required to maintain station operations during the construction.
- Members also questioned how future procurement arrangements would protect the Council from further cost escalation and delays.
- A member welcomed the more practical nature of the revised St Margarets junction proposals and highlighted a suggested design adjustment relating to traffic flow onto Vaughan Way, which he believed could further improve junction capacity. The City Transport Director suggested this could be investigated.
- He also suggested that consideration be given to emergency service access through the underpass area.
- In response, The City Transport Director advised that emergency services were statutory consultees and would be consulted on detailed access requirements as the scheme progressed.
- A member queried arrangements for motorists accessing Church Gate and raised concerns about the visual appearance of graffiti in the underpass area and questioned the environmental implications of filling sections of the underpass with concrete, given the Council's climate change objectives.
- The City Transport Director advised that the vehicle access to Church Gate would be maintained via alternative routes, the existing right-turn arrangement would be removed as part of the scheme. Consultants had been tasked with assessing the carbon impacts which will also be considered through procurement and design decisions.
- A member recognised the strategic importance of the site given its role in connecting the A47, A6 and other routes into the city. Members sought clarification regarding increased traffic levels since the Covid-19 pandemic, the impact of lane changes on traffic congestion and wider traffic management implications.
- The City Transport Director advised that modelling indicated that traffic would continue to flow effectively due to retaining most of the existing lanes, reducing the likelihood of significant disruption.
- A member asked about planning obligations and wider connectivity associated with the Corah development.
- Officers advised that the vision for the wider area included improved pedestrian links, including connections through the development and across new bridge infrastructure to Abbey Park, improving access between the city centre and surrounding areas.

- A member raised concerns regarding connections between the bus station and railway station, taxi and private vehicle access arrangements, accessibility of proposed ramps and routes and potential difficulties for people with disabilities, mobility impairments, pushchairs and luggage.
- The City Mayor commented that there was the free 'Hop' bus service available for users between the bus station and the Railway Station.
- The Chair noted that accessibility had been an important issue during previous station improvements and emphasised the need to avoid repeating past mistakes.
- The Programme Manager advised that extensive engagement had already taken place with disability access groups and representative organisations. Feedback had been sought not only on physical accessibility, but also on neurodiversity and wider user experience considerations.
- Accessibility groups would continue to be involved throughout future design stages. Proposed ramp gradients would be fully compliant with accessibility standards.

After considering the evidence presented, the proposer of the call-in proposed that the Commission receive regular updates and the Call in be withdrawn. The Chair put this to the Commission and it was AGREED.

RESOLVED

That the Call-in be withdrawn

AGREED

That the Commission receive regular updates on the programmes

231. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no other further business, the meeting closed at 18:45pm.