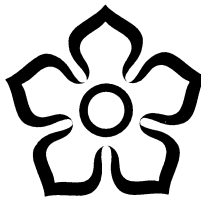


Thursday, 27 June 2013



Leicester
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE MINUTES PAST FIVE O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Thursday, 27 JUNE 2013 duly convened for the business hereunder mentioned.

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BUSINESS

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1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

3. **PETITIONS**

- Presented by Councillors
- Presented by Members of the Public

4. **QUESTIONS**

- From Members of the Public
- From Councillors

5. **REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

To receive and consider reports of the Executive as follows:

- 5.1 Provision of Community Care to People Who Access Substance Misuse Service

6. **REPORTS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

To receive and consider reports of Scrutiny Committees as follows:

- 6.1 Scrutiny Annual Report

7. **REPORTS OF REGULATORY COMMITTEES**

To receive and consider reports of Regulatory Committees as follows:

- 7.1 Appointment of Chief Operating Officer

8. **EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEES** - To note any changes to the Executive. To vary the composition and fill any vacancies of any Committee of Council.

9. **NOTICES OF MOTION**
10. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

PRESENT:

MUSTAFA KAMAL, LORD MAYOR
CHAIRMAN

Abbey Ward

ANNETTE BYRNE
VIJAY SINGH RIYAIT

Freemen Ward

ELLY CUTKELVIN
WILLIAM HENRY SHELTON

Aylestone Ward

ADAM CLARKE
NIGEL CARL PORTER

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RITA PATEL
BARBARA ANNE POTTER
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Beaumont Leys Ward

VIOLET GEDDES GRAHAM DEMPSTER
SUNDIP MEGHANI
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

Knighton Ward

ROSS GRANT
INDERJIT SINGH GUGNANI
DR LYNN MOORE

Belgrave Ward

RASHMIKANT JOSHI
JOHN WILLIAM THOMAS

Latimer Ward

VEEJAY PATEL
MANJULA PAUL SOOD

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields

MICHAEL ERNEST COOKE

New Parks Ward

DAWN ALFONSO
STEPHEN PETER CORRALL
MALCOLM WILLIAM UNSWORTH

Castle Ward

NEIL CLAYTON
PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK
LYNN SENIOR

Rushey Mead Ward

CULDIPP SINGH BHATTI
ROSS WILLMOTT

Charnwood Ward

PAUL DARREN NEWCOMBE
ABDUL RAZAK OSMAN

Spinney Hills Ward

HANIF AQBANY
SHOFIQL ISLAM CHOWDHURY
MOHAMMED DAWOOD

Coleman Ward

MIAN MOHAMMED MAYAT

Stoneygate Ward

LUCY CHAPLIN
IQBAL ALIBHAI DESAI

Evington Ward

DEEPAK BAJAJ
BALJIT SINGH

Eyres Monsell Ward

VIRGINIA CLEAVER
RORY PALMER

Fosse Ward

TED CASSIDY
SUSAN WADDINGTON

Thurncourt Ward

LUIS FONSECA
ROBERT WANN

Westcotes Ward

ANDREW IAN CONNELLY
SARAH CHRISTINE RUSSELL

Western Park Ward

DR SUSAN BARTON
GEORGE COLE

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Councillors declared interests as detailed below:

Councillor Senior	<p>Other disclosable interest in Question 8 (put by Councillor Clarke) concerning the forthcoming closure of the A426 as her partner worked for the City Council in the Transport Strategy team.</p> <p>Other disclosable interest in Question 19 (put by Councillor Porter) concerning resurfacing works on Lutterworth Road as her partner worked for the City Council in the Transport Strategy team.</p> <p>Councillor Senior stated that she would leave the Chamber during the consideration of the questions above.</p> <p>Other disclosable interest in Question 21 (put by Councillor Porter) concerning pension contributions for elected Members as she was a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.</p>
Councillor Cassidy	<p>Other disclosable interest in Question 5 (put by Councillor Singh) concerning the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) as a board Member of the LLEP.</p>

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor and carried:

10. That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 March 2013 and the Annual Meeting 23 May 2013, having been printed and a copy sent to each Member of the Council be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record and;

that Annual Meeting in 2014 be held on Thursday 29 May 2014.

PETITIONS

PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Ms Pauline Haines presented a petition with 566 signatures in the following terms:

“We the undersigned wish to register our protest at the proposed closure of Nuffield House Elderly Persons’ Home”.

PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Dempster presented a petition with 11 signatures in the following terms:

“We the undersigned protest at, object to and deplore in the strongest possible terms the expressed intended removal of the locks from the communal drying rooms at Gresley Close, Beaumont Leys. We also protest at, object to and deplore the fact that this action is apparently to be imposed without any consultation whatsoever with the tenants.

We also protest at, object to and deplore the fact that the above action will clearly render the drying rooms unusable for that purpose by removal of all security for items legitimately placed there to dry. The security doors are unlocked for the whole of each and every morning of every day. At least one tenant has already had clothing stolen from an unlocked drying room.

We believe that the above action is in fact illegal, in that changing or removal of locks by a landlord without a tenant’s consent constitutes ‘harassment of a tenant’, a serious criminal offense. The drying rooms are clearly part of the property rented by each tenant. An element of the rent clearly established during the preceding thirty-six years life of these buildings.

We also protest at, object to and deplore the fact that the author of the above enclosed letter fails to identify themselves in print, fails to include a correspondence address on their letter and seeks to avoid responsibility for their actions by concealing their identity with a perfunctory scrawl of a scribbled monograph.

We request that all drying room locks be reinstated and that all tenants herein undersigned are provided with keys thereto.”

Moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor and carried:

11. That the aforementioned petitions be referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.

QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the public.

Questions from Councillors

Cllr. Waddington: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Will the City Mayor write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer pointing out that the introduction of the Robin Hood tax in the UK would raise up to £20 billion which could be used to boost the economy and fund vital public services. Will he also explain in his letter that this tax would provide an opportunity for the financial sector to make a contribution towards cleaning up the mess it caused rather than the burden falling upon local authorities like Leicester City Council and our citizens. Would the City Mayor ask George Osborne to therefore introduce the Robin Hood tax in the UK and drop his legal challenge to prevent the tax being implemented in other European countries that have already agreed it?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I particularly welcome the opportunity to answer this question on the day after the government announced further and even more savage cuts in the basic services that people expect from their local councils. The Robin Hood tax, or the financial transactions tax to give it its full title, has been proposed by campaigners to obtain funding from the financial sector to support general government expenditure and I think also particularly it has been argued that it is a way in which to contribute to supporting some of the poorest countries in the world and to enable aid to be given to them. In fact 11 EU states including France and Germany, but of course excluding the UK, have already signed up to a tax of this sort from the summer of 2014 and I very much regret that the British government has sought to dismiss the imposition of such a tax in the way they have. I will certainly be writing to the Chancellor to make the arguments as Cllr. Waddington has outlined them in her question. I did incidentally have the opportunity this morning to meet with the Deputy Prime Minister and to ask him to back our City Deal in Leicester, and it did occur to me how much better it would be if the government were able to put some resources where their rhetoric is in that respect. Frankly a chunk of that £20 billion invested in skills and jobs here in Leicester would be money very well spent rather than leaving it in the coffers of the financial institutions that are so much the cause of the financial mess this country finds itself in.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Waddington do you have a supplementary question? Cllr. Meghani, question number 2.

Cllr. Meghani: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Can the relevant Cabinet Lead please advise on what progress has been made thus far on creating a water based facility within the City for the consecration of ashes following cremation?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Sood.

Cllr. Sood: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I thank Cllr. Meghani for this question. My Lord Mayor scattering of ashes respectfully amongst Hindus, Sikhs and Jains is very important to the families. It sometimes means they have to travel to India for this ceremony. Any site regularly used for the scattering of ashes would need to be approved by the Environment Agency who would check that there is enough water to disperse the ashes, that no-one is using the water just downstream and that other river users are not going to be affected. Because of the often low floor rates in the River Soar the presence of buildings, parks, marinas and angling waters it would be extremely difficult to find a suitable location within the City. However, my Lord Mayor there is an excellent Environment Agency approved site in Barrow upon Soar which is a few miles away from Leicester. Barrow Boating can provide a tranquil and peaceful environment for the scattering of ashes and the water based facility is provided. I am very proud that after the personal tragedy of the death of my husband I campaigned for this facility because many families that live in the UK cannot afford to travel to India. It is optional, and I am very proud to say that British Waterways and the Environment Agencies were very supportive and co-operative and our City Mayor was the Deputy Chair of the British Waterways at that time, Mr Green, who was the Chair. He in fact went to meet some saints, Hindu saints and learn the importance of this ceremony and he was very, very supportive. And so, if you are not aware of that across Europe families are coming and using this facility 7 days a week and his name is Frank and he is very, very supportive and you can go on the website and you can see the boat. There are facilities for the religious ceremonies whether you are Sikh, Jain or Hindu. So you are most welcome to go and visit that if ever you want to do that.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Meghani do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Meghani: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Sood for that answer. I am of course up to speed with the facility at Barrow on Soar, it is about 12 miles away and it costs £100 to hire a boat to disperse ashes in that facility. It is good and we are very lucky to have that in Leicestershire. I understand of course from what you say there are very many obstacles and the Environment Agency and other stakeholders need to be consulted. But it would be great to have an assurance from you that all possible avenues are looked into and that everything that we could possibly look at and examine will be examined because obviously with Leicester having such a huge population from faith groups that rely on that service it would be ideal if we had something within the City boundaries. So it would be good to have that assurance from you that all possible avenues will be looked into. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Sood

Cllr. Sood: Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Cllr. Meghani. First the money which it costs is £100 but imagine travelling to India for a whole family, it would cost thousands of pounds, and even when you go to India the ceremony is not free it costs thousands of rupees because I have gone through that. But assurance is there because the officers and directors they have looked everywhere but this is why my assurance is we can again look at the avenues if there is anything or if you know anywhere then you can talk to the officers and we will look into it again. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Meghani, question number 3.

Cllr. Meghani: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Would the Cabinet Lead for Children, Young People and Schools please join me in congratulating Babington Community College in Beaumont Leys for being awarded an outstanding ranking by Ofsted and would she further join me in congratulating the Head Teacher and all the staff for a job well done?

Cllr. Dempster: Thank you Cllr. Meghani for that question. Obviously as the Cabinet Lead, but also as a Ward Councillor, I am absolutely over the moon about what has happened to Babington, because I think we all remember, particularly Councillor Westley, the Councillor in Beaumont Leys for some 18 years, we remember the reputation perhaps that Babington had in the past and now, what we have got is a school and, it is not us saying this is a good school, this is Ofsted and I think one of the really important issues is that we recognise what does a good school look like and lets just have a look at what Ofsted say. They say that every student across the range of abilities high or low is helped to make great progress in that school. And that is what matters, that every parent can have confidence that when their child goes to Babington they will reach their full potential. I think that is an excellent requirement of all schools across the City, and I would want to say to people go and look at your local school, because although Babington is only one of two that has an outstanding grading from Ofsted 98% of the others have a good rating. We have good schools in every community across the City and I think that that is something that we can all celebrate and feel very, very pleased for our children and for our families. And of course added to that is the fact that Babington is part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project with money from the last Labour government investing in our schools. We have already seen the difference that money is making to some of our schools, for example Beaumont Leys School

and this is going to make a real difference to Babington, so I am really, really pleased for Babington. I think it has been a huge effort from the staff, the governors, an inspirational Head Teacher, but also some fantastic young people and the families that are right there behind them. So, yes of course I am so pleased for Babington. Thank you for raising the matter.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary Cllr. Meghani?
Question 4, Councillor Dr. Barton

Cllr. Dr. Barton : On the 6th July the second Western Park Family Festival is due to take place. This is a free to enter event which will showcase local community groups, our beautiful park and the talents of Leicester musicians and performers. It is entirely run by volunteers and is supported by our ward community budget. Last year's event was excellent and a privilege to be part of and attracted a couple of thousand people. This year's festival promises to be even bigger and better. Will the Lord Mayor, Mayor, Assistant Mayors and Councillors join me in wishing the Friends of Western Park our best wishes for the success of the festival and thanks to those volunteers involved, especially Adrian Alexander, for their hard work on behalf of our community?

Cllr. Russell – Thank you my Lord Mayor. It is an absolute pleasure to congratulate and wish all the best to the Friends of Western Park for the upcoming festival, and I am sure I can speak on behalf of the mayoral team, Councillors and yourself Lord Mayor in wishing them a wonderful day and hopefully some good weather for it as well. This is one of a series of fantastic events going on across our parks all over the City throughout the summer. We have got a wonderful bandstand that has been recently refurbished at Western Park and I would urge people to go along on that day, see the Western Park Festival, listen to the local bands, it is a great family event. Also, to look at the calendar of other events going on in our parks throughout the summer. A lot of them have been done with volunteers and there are all sorts of opportunities to really enjoy yourselves for very, very little money and I would urge people to attend and congratulations to all those involved.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Dr. Barton do you have a supplementary question?
Question 5, Cllr. Singh.

Cllr. Singh: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Will the City Mayor outline those initiatives under economic and regeneration strategy implemented over the last year since 2012 which underpins the work with business organisations, LLEP Chambers and other relevant employer organisations to promote job creation and employment opportunities in the City?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am pleased to say that we are very well advanced in delivering what we set out to achieve with our partners in our ambitious economic action plan. In fact my Lord Mayor it is so well advanced that in seeking to provide me with notes summarising, and I stress summarising, those achievements officers have produced five pages. I think rather than actually reading them to members this evening, for which I don't think they will thank me even if they are impressed at the end of it, I will undertake to supply them to Councillor Singh and indeed to other members so that they can be aware of the wide range of initiatives that have been delivered. I am also very pleased to note that the Economic Development Scrutiny Commission will be resuming a comprehensive report at the end of July on our progress at the delivery of the

Economic Actin Plan and I am looking forward to giving them a report of what has been achieved and respond to their questions.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Singh do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Singh: Yes I do Lord Mayor. Thank you. My thanks to the City Mayor in putting the information on public record regarding the Council's successes. In the current economic climate, under this Coalition Government, the Council need to sustain and boost economic recovery and this must be a necessary priority. Will the City Mayor assure the constituents of the City that political and practical programmes to help the local economy remains a high priority?

City Mayor: Yes my Lord Mayor I am very pleased to give that assurance, and in giving that assurance to recognise the scope of the initiatives that we are engaging ourselves and encouraging others to undertake which do range from the provision of skills particularly for young people to enable them to be fit to take the jobs that might be available in the locality, through to the larger economic and generative investments of a capital nature and as I said my Lord Mayor I did look forward to reporting very fully on that to members but will in the meantime let them have copies of the summary that I have received.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Singh, question number 6.

Cllr. Singh: Thank you my Lord mayor "Will the Assistant Mayor for Children and Young Person's Services inform the Council of the numbers of appeals submitted by parents regarding school preferences for this year and the numbers concluded, and those which are still pending?"

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Dempster.

Cllr. Dempster: Thank you my Lord Mayor. In terms of year 6 transfer to secondary school appeals 202 appeals have been received by the 25th June and of those 20 remain to be heard. In terms of first time admission appeals received by 25th June there were 205, of which 79 remain to be heard and there were 743 mid-term appeals received by the 25th June, 202 remain to be heard.

Lord Mayor: Do you have any supplementaries Cllr. Singh?

Cllr. Singh: No my Lord Mayor, not a supplementary but I would like to proceed on to the next one which will carry a supplementary.

Cllr. Singh: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Again to the Assistant Mayor how does the authority compare with last year's figures on the numbers of appeals received?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Dempster.

Cllr. Dempster: Thank you. If I give you the broad figures. 142 appeals for the year 6 transfer to secondary school, 212 first time admissions appeals and 653 mid-term appeals. So roughly the same.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Singh: Yes I do. My thanks to the Assistant Mayor for the answer Lord Mayor. I think what is important is for me to recognise that there is a huge trauma associated with the appeals exercise. I mean for parents the education and social

welfare of their children is vitally important. Will the Assistant Mayor assure me that the numbers of appeals will continue to be reduced further and that efforts will be made as such through better management procedures and to bring a report to inform all members of the Council of the initiatives to be undertaken to achieve that performance. I think it is the information for all Council members in all Wards because I am sure it is relevant to everyone in this case. Thank you.

Cllr. Dempster: Thank you for that supplementary. I think that we all either as parents or as Ward Councillors recognise just what a difficult position parents find themselves in when they are having to go for a school appeal, and that it is a very, very stressful situation for all involved. And of course one of the things that we are doing to make sure that the need for going to appeal is lessened, is first of all give parents the right information at the right time and that is critically important because what we know is that parents who apply on time have a much better opportunity of getting the school of their choice. So that is one issue. A second issue is and we know that parents choose schools for a whole variety of reasons, but I do think that the more confidence people have in their local school the more likely they are to choose their local school and then the more likely they are to get in to their local school because it is people who want to get into a school that is not in their catchment area that are much more likely to have to go to appeal. And of course the other way in which we are addressing this problem is through the capital programme. We know that we have got pressure on places and we have already built that in to the BSF programme, so you will find that some of our schools through BSF are actually increasing in size as they are built again. This is a very, very important piece of work that has to be carefully managed so as not to destabilise other schools that within the BSF programme we have expansion at certain schools and also within the primary capital programme we are year on year looking at how we can expand particularly popular schools cross the City, thereby, hopefully, it should reduce the need for appeals. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Clarke, question number 8

Councillor Senior left the Chamber while this question was put and answered.

Cllr. Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Will the City Mayor contact his friends at County Hall who hold the better bus area fund budget and discuss the possibility of giving a partial rate rebate to hard pressed businesses in the Aylestone local shopping area. These businesses are concerned about the loss of trade during the forthcoming closure of the A426 and I am obviously concerned on their behalf?

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I suspect Cllr. Clarke may have his tongue in his cheek when he talks about my friends at County Hall, however, it does give me an opportunity to say how well the two authorities have worked together on this and indeed many other transportation schemes. We do have very good working relationships and obviously have a common interest in dealing with the schemes in ways that have benefited both the people within the City and those that are travelling into the City from the County. But I do share the concerns that he expresses regarding potential loss of trade arising from this particular scheme and it was with that in mind that the City and the County working together did try to give as much notice as possible about the scheme and the temporary traffic management arrangements that are being put in place. The intention being that this will give businesses, particularly, but residents as well the opportunity to make arrangements to mitigate the impact in so far as is possible, and also time for the contractor's staff to provide as much information to support those businesses and residents. As I think Cllr. Clarke is aware we have put in place arrangements so

that, not just that you will get the information in advance, but so that there are people on site throughout the work to ensure that they are responding to any problems that emerge during that period and are able to be responsive to them. Unfortunately, though I have checked on this, and highway authorities such as the City and the County don't have powers under the Highways Act to give compensation for disruption caused by road works. I understand that in certain circumstances businesses may be entitled to a temporary reduction in rates due to the disruption caused by major road works, and I have got and will let Cllr. Clarke have it, details of where businesses should apply. But I have also instructed our officers to ensure that businesses along the corridor are advised about their rights and where to make an application.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Clarke: I do my Lord Mayor. That is incredibly helpful and I look forward to receiving that information and passing the good news on to the traders of Aylestone. My supplementary is really to ask if you have a message for those who might be disrupted, Aylestone residents and those who will be diverted around Aylestone during the works, because they are very complicated works, it is not simply the case of relaying some tarmac and I think it is worth letting residents and those who commute through from the County in to the City Centre know how you feel about the disruption that might be caused.

City Mayor: Thank you Cllr. Clark for that supplementary. Yes the actual works are very extensive indeed and it is not just a question of putting a new surface on the roads you have got to actually dig down and put new sub-structure below it before they re-do the surface and that is why it takes so long and why it is so extensive. There was an option of trying to put a contraflow system in and doing it over a much longer period of time, and I think quite rightly when they looked at that and advised me and indeed County members on it, I think we all concluded that it was far better to just get on with it and get it done and to put a diversion in during that six week period, particularly as the period coincides for the most part with the school holiday period. Whilst there are still obviously a lot of vehicles around but the school run traffic is off the roads for the most part, some people away from the City as well and it was better to just get it done in those circumstances. More generally on the scheme, although it obviously is disruptive, as I have remarked before for all types of road uses the scheme is of significant benefit it is not just the bus users, who do obviously get the benefit out of it because the buses are much more likely to run on time and run in a reliable fashion, but it is also a scheme that improves the situation for car drivers because the junction capacity has improved, for cyclists because it is very significant cycle element within it which makes it safer for them and for pedestrians because crossing the road will be a lot safer as a result of this. So, while I do understand the inevitable concern and frustration that residents and businesses will find during the period of implementation, I do firmly believe that it will be worth it.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Clarke, question number 9.

Cllr. Clarke: Thank you again my Lord Mayor. Will Assistant Mayor, Cllr. Dempster update the Council on the situation at Rushey Mead Secondary School which I understand is seriously considering leaving the authority?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Dempster.

Cllr. Dempster: Thanks very much Cllr. Clarke for raising this because this is

actually a matter of some concern I think to many people who recognise that it does matter if the school leaves the local authority, and I say that because not everybody recognises or realises that actually schools leaving the local authority does matter. They think well why would that affect us, but actually it does affect them so I think it is very important that this has been raised in this chamber. In actual fact my understanding is that the governors have made it very clear to staff that they are not in a position to make a decision but that is not what they have decided to do but what they agreed to be doing is asking for money from the government to go out to a consultation process in September. I think it is really important that we just remind ourselves of why we are not in favour and supportive of schools going to academy status and that is because what we have in this City is actually working. It is delivering results year on year in schools right across the City. So that is the reason that we are not supportive of schools going for academy status. Because the other issue is that unlike the Labour initiative this initiatives does not bring added resources so there is no value for a school to go towards academy status. So why would you do it when in actual fact what we know about the consultation process which I hope will always be a rigorous and inclusive process, but what we know that in that rigour and being inclusive, what that does is it takes people's eye off the ball and the ball is about school improvement. It is about focusing on every young child being able to reach their full potential. It is not about spending hours and hours in meetings somewhere thinking about should we go to academy status when in actual fact there is no real benefit to it anyway. So I hope that when this decision to proceed or otherwise is considered in September and October that those factors that I have outlined here will be given very strong consideration in the decision they can process.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary Cllr. Clarke?

Cllr. Clarke: I do thank you my Lord Mayor. Cllr. Dempster will know that I have had a long standing interest in academies and academisation and a personal, professional interest and of course political interest. Obviously my concern is that a school that leaves a local authority anywhere in the City will have an impact on children around the City because that it money moving out of the local authority and therefore cannot be more strategically distributed. My supplementary is round Building Schools for the Future though. Obviously we have got an incredible track record in BSF and a lot of local authority resources have been put in to Building Schools for the Future, and I suppose I do have a concern that schools will leave the authority as soon as the BSF project finishes and we put a lot of investment into that work and personally I would like that investment to continue as those schools grow beyond their new buildings.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Dempster, would you like to respond?

Cllr. Dempster: Well what can I say, yes it is very disappointing that it has actually happened already in the City, not with secondary schools obviously but with primary schools where we have invested very heavily in those schools and then they have gone academy status. And of course what that means is that resource is taken away from the local authority. So yes I can only share your concern and it is another reason why we should all be saying very, very clearly to all our schools you need to remain with the local authority. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Corrall, question number 10.

Cllr. Corrall: Thank you my Lord Mayor. As the City Mayor is aware one of the Council's employees sadly lost his son last year to sudden arrhythmic death

syndrome. Would he consider initiating basic life support training for some, if not all, of the Council's employees so that our staff would be able to assist if a life threatening incident occurred in their presence?

Lord Mayor: Deputy City Mayor.

Deputy City Mayor: Thank you Cllr. Corrall for this question. It is of course not customary in this chamber in these meetings to mention individuals by name but I think on this occasion we would all want to extend our best wishes to Steve Humphreys, a very popular member of Council staff who suffered an unspeakable tragedy last October, so I am sure we would all like to extend our best wishes to Steve and his family. The Council does provide first aid training, including basic life support training, to its staff and actually this question also gives the opportunity to recognise those staff from time to time who have to put that training into practice. That probably happens more often than people may realise, particularly in our leisure centres where lifeguards and leisure staff are often called upon to put that training into very important practice, and we are certainly committed to making sure we continue to provide that first aid training including basic life-saving and CPR training to our staff across the Authority.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary Cllr. Corrall?

Cllr. Corrall: Yes thank you my Lord Mayor. Can I thank the Deputy City Mayor for that positive response. Actually I understand there is going to be a charitable event happening next week at Molly O'Grady's on Wednesday if anybody would like to attend. The supplementary is would the City Mayor consider working with EMAS to install automatic defibrillators in larger Council premises so that the staff can assist someone more speedily if needed and potentially save more lives.

Deputy City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I have actually been in contact with EMAS recently about their work to roll out defibrillators across public buildings. We currently have them in a number of leisure centres, we have plans to introduce them in some of our parks, and indeed there are plans to introduce one at De Montfort Hall as well in the coming months, so that is certainly an agenda we are committed to and I am looking forward to having further discussions with EMAS on that very matter in the coming weeks.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Chaplin, question number 11.

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. According to recent figures from the British Heart Foundation 70% of parents and 78% of pupils surveyed said that emergency life support skills like CPR should be taught in schools. Given that this could help more people survive cardiac arrest will the Council introduce this training into City schools so that our young people have these important skills from an early age?

Deputy City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Let me thank Cllr. Chaplin for this important question as well. On a personal note I do support the introduction of this sort of training in schools and indeed supported a recent campaign to have life-saving skills, including CPR, included in the national curriculum. I understand the government are currently looking at that. The Council is not in a position at the moment to compel schools to do this, however, we are exploring a number of ways of working in partnership with schools to make sure that more young people do receive basic first aid training including life-savings skills as well. Not unrelated to the answers to the previous questions, this is a really important area of work and I

think it is really important that our young people, through schools, through colleges, but also through workplaces and community groups as well, have the opportunity to receive this important training and we are exploring a number of ways to make that happen in all our communities across the City.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you for the enthusiastic response Deputy City Mayor, and I am really pleased that obviously this is something that you are trying to explore. I wondered if you would give an undertaking to keep this Council and also parents and young people across the City more informed about how that is progressing just so that we know it is not something that is dropping off the Council's radar?

Deputy City Mayor: I will respond to the supplementary my Lord Mayor on the important issue that has been raised. It certainly will not fall off our radar, and I just want to go back to the previous question. I was fortunate to be at the launch of the Joe Humphreys Memorial Trust last year and I think the determination of the young people there was nothing but inspiring and actually when this agenda is driven by young people and young people themselves are empowered to take some leadership around this issue we will see some really incredible results and that is the approach we want to take in the City. Actually let's have young people driving this forward, working with us, working with community groups, working with EMAS and the other agencies involved across the health system as well. That is the approach I want to see us adopt, having young people driving this agenda forward and on that basis I am absolutely confident that there is absolutely no risk it will fall off our radar.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, question number 12

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. With reports that the bee population is diminishing, will the Council introduce bee allotments as proposed by some of my constituents in the Stoneygate Ward in a bid to make the City more bee friendly?

Lord Mayor: Deputy City Mayor

Deputy City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. This again is an important issue that the bee population is in decline and there are real consequences for biodiversity because of that. We are certainly committed to making sure the City is bee friendly. If you look at some of the wild flower meadows that we have planted in recent years, in our parks and what is called the Olympic Meadow at Castle Hill Country Park, currently in full bloom, it is a wonderful addition to that park and plays a very important role around this particular agenda. On the issue of bee hives being located on allotments which is obviously the origin of this question, that does present some concerns and some problems but they will be discussed when the allotment strategy is reviewed. We are, however, committed to exploring with those with an interest in this matter to find some areas of land where bee hives can be located within the City to help sustain a healthy bee population in the City.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you Deputy Mayor again. I agree with you it is a very important issue and given that some constituents have had bee hives on allotments and they have been asked not to have them it is a pity and I would hope that certainly when looking at this issue in terms of what is right for bees, Cities are really good for bees and I hope that the City Mayor and his team will give an

undertaking that they will look at places like Highfields, potentially it could be a very good place apparently for bees.

Deputy City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. We will certainly explore possible solutions in other cities, rooftops are good locations for the bee hives as well as parks, green spaces and other areas of designated land. I suspect Cllr. Chaplin by raising this question has created a little bit of a buzz around this issue – could not resist, but we will certainly commit to taking this forward and doing what we can to sustain a healthy bee population in the City.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, question number 13

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. How many responses from groups and individuals have there been to the current consultation on the Council's proposals for the future of its elderly people's homes?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Patel.

Cllr Patel: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you Cllr. Chaplin. The Council carried out public consultation exercise between March and September 2011 which was the original exercise, an extensive exercise. To that we had 172 responses. The current consultation is more of a top up exercise recognising that it is necessary to gain the views on the original options from any new residents that we have got in the homes who have moved in since September 2011, but also recognising that an extensive public consultation has already taken place on the options being proposed. To date we have had 91 responses on the current exercise which started on 9th April and will finish on the 10th July.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you for your answer Cllr. Patel. Obviously we have just heard about how important it is to keep schools in the City and not turn into academies and given the enthusiasm on that from the Assistant Mayor for Children and Young People Services will she given an undertaking, that is Cllr. Patel, that she will be encouraging her colleagues on the Executive to visit all of our elderly care homes in the City before the consultation ends including the City Mayor, Deputy Mayor , all of the Executive Team.

Cllr. Patel: Thank you Cllr. Chaplin. I believe that Executive members have ready visited the homes and obviously the offer is always open.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, question number 14

Cllr. Chaplin: What plans are there to develop more dedicated exhibition spaces for contemporary art as part of Leicester's bid for the UK City of Culture in 2017?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. Over the last couple of years Leicester's visual arts scene has flourished with for example good progress made by Embrace Arts on its new gallery space, the opening of the Two Queens Gallery in the cultural quarter and of course the development of the Leicester's UK City of Culture bid has been a good moment to take stock of what has been achieved over recent years and ways in which we can support the many talented local practitioners. So we are indeed exploring currently ways in which we can support initiatives to create further

opportunities for exhibition of their work as well as obviously encouraging the development of further commercial galleries.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary Cllr. Chaplin?

Cllr. Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Given that over the last week or 10 days De Montfort University has had over 4,000 visitors to its degree shows in art and design ranging from footwear to fine art and crafts and the whole range in-between, will the City Mayor give an undertaking that certainly in developing plans for 2017, some relationship will be developed in terms of the contemporary arts spaces available and also what is on show at the De Montfort University to bring that into our City of Culture bid.

City Mayor: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. I am very happy to give that assurance. In fact both of our universities have got a lot of talent that deserves to have opportunities to be displayed and shared with the rest of us who are in the City at the moment and know of it but of course through the City of Culture to be shared with the rest of the country and indeed to be shared internationally. What they have is I think truly stupendous and I will indeed take every opportunity to encourage them to show off the work that they do and also as I was saying in response to the initial question to look to find further opportunities for space to be provided whether by those in academic institutions, by those in voluntary organisations or in commercial situations to ensure that we do have the sort of space that is needed to show the excellent work of the City to its greatest advantage.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Grant, question number 15

Cllr. Grant: Thank you Lord Mayor. Why did the City Mayor wait so long to sell the old post office building on Bishop Street at a loss of over half a million pounds?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor the former post office building on Bishop Street was sold in a manner and at a time when officers advised that it was possible for us to maximise the return to the Council.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Grant: Doesn't the City Mayor think that we could have sold the post office sooner and saved money considering the running costs involved and also given the use that we are selling the post office for, doesn't it show a worrying lack of strategy for the City Centre?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, unlike the Haymarket Theatre, and I am on record as having talked about the on-going costs of maintaining that, the costs of Bishop Street were not ones that persuaded me that they were so significant as to require us to sell at something below what is its commercial value in the current market situation. The short answer is no I do not believe that until the offer that was ultimately accepted had been received by us that there was actually one that reflected the value of that property and that maximised the return to the Council for the value of one of our assets.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Grant, question number 16

Question 16 – Cllr. Grant: When will the City Mayor provide councillors with the full details of his various decisions around the City for relocating Council staff and services which previously came under CLABS?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, Members will be aware on that on my election 2 years ago I inherited a number of proposals relating to the future of the City Council in the city Centre. I did immediately call for a review of the overall programme with a particular emphasis on costs, the consideration of how we can use our existing buildings more effectively and better utilisation of our leased properties in the City. The direct response to the question that Cllr. Grant has put to me is that the report and the subsequent key decision were published on the 25th June and are therefore publicly available and they do set out the overall strategy for accommodation in the City Centre. I am very much looking forward to responding to member's questions about the way forward on this at a meeting of the Economic Development Scrutiny Commission which I believe is to be held next week – I see the chair nodding – and will give members an opportunity to scrutinise both the decisions and the reason for them.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Grant do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Grant: Councillors were previously much more involved in the whole agenda around CLABS and had a much better full understanding of it. Isn't it rich of the City Mayor to attack other Councillors in the Mercury who are trying to express opinions when they have been denied the full facts and figures which would previously have been quite open to them under other administrations?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I better explain to Cllr. Grant and Members will recall me saying just a few moments ago, that the figures behind this are in the public domain, there will be an opportunity for Members to consider those figures and the arguments behind the strategy that I am adopting at scrutiny. I trust that Cllr. Grant will be there and I trust he will take the opportunity as a member of the Council, as one of the opposition Members in the Council, to ensure that the questions that he may have are fully answered and explored.

Question 17 – Cllr. Grant: Does the City Mayor think some of the public spats he is having in the press with his own Councillors would be avoidable if he was as open and transparent as previous leaders of the Council have been?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, those that were around at the time tell me that Cllr. Grant has a reputation for asking similar questions to each of my two predecessors and bemoaning the fact that apparently he felt that they were insufficiently transparent at the time. No doubt he is now looking back with a rather different pair of glasses, but the short answer to him is no I do not think that any robust discussion that we have between ourselves on this side of the chamber would be any different in the circumstances, indeed I do sometimes feel very sorry for Cllr. Grant because of course he is not able to have robust discussions with other members of his group since there are none.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Grant, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Grant: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Certainly the irony is not fully lost on me although I do believe I had a lot less reason to accuse Cllr. Patel of being lacking in openness and transparency, but on the theme of public spats with Councillors, in light of Leicester's shortlisting for the City of Culture, does he regret his damning assessment of the Curve which must have played heavily in Leicester's favour in being shortlisted, and ironically does he think that he could now get a lesson from Cllr. Willmott on openness and transparency who was at least in respect of CLABS much more open than the City Mayor has been?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, I won't read it in full but I do have Cllr. Grant's question to Cllr. Patel here at the Council on the 25th March 2010 in which he bemoans the lack of transparency of the then leadership and contrasted it with the lack of transparency of the previous leadership so clearly transparency is something of an obsession with Cllr. Grant. My Lord Mayor, to be serious, those of us who have previously been leaders or me as Mayor, Members have a right to expect that we will be open with them, will answer their questions, will engage in proper scrutiny. I hope that Cllr. Grant will take the opportunity to engage in that scrutiny in future, he has not always turned up to meetings in the past but perhaps given his new interest in actually asking questions and finding out what is going on in the organisation, will lead him to be there in the future.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Grant, question number 18

Cllr. Grant: A point of information Lord Mayor, I am spread rather thinly across committees. Why is it acceptable for departments of the Council to spend significant sums of money and then not carry out any evaluation of the outcomes or assess the value for money of that expenditure? What is the limit he thinks is acceptable that his officers not bother to evaluate such schemes?

City Mayor: I am still chuckling at the idea of Cllr. Grant being spread thinly. My Lord Mayor, post implementation evaluation is generally to be welcomed and although it is of course highly important I also believe that it needs to be both timely and proportionate.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Grant, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Grant: Yes Lord Mayor. I am concerned about a particular scheme in Children's Services where we provided laptops to pupils of five schools, 150 laptops at a cost of over £300,000. The total budget was about £360,000 where I was initially told that no evaluation was going to take place that it was a pilot scheme which as we weren't going to progress with it, no evaluation would take place. I must admit since submitting the question I have spoken to officers who have said that there may be some evaluation taking place but I am very concerned that a scheme is taking place where the deliverables are not actually working, apparently these 150 laptops no longer access the internet as they were intended to so, and whether the scheme has been well implemented or not, it would be an absolute shame doesn't the City Mayor think that we spend £360,000 in Children's Services and gain no lessons or best practice from that expenditure?

City Mayor: I am just consulting with colleagues as to quite when this purchase took place. I have been told several years ago. It is certainly not something I am aware of. I did in my initial response say that while I do believe that post implementation evaluation is to be welcomed and is important, it does need to be proportionate. But the other issue is timely. I wonder frankly why Cllr. Grant is raising it at this time, it certainly could not be said to be something that is current or timely.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, question number 19.

Councillor Senior left the Chamber while this question was put and answered.

Cllr. Porter: Thank you Lord Mayor. Why will it take six weeks to resurface the short section of Lutterworth Road?

City Mayor: Well Lord Mayor I think I actually touched on this in my response earlier on to Cllr. Clarke. The section of carriageway as I say has been squeezed into that very brief period, considerably less than was originally being suggested by officers, is this section between Lutterworth Road and Soar Valley Way and Middleton Street. The fact is that the carriageway there has structurally failed. It has structurally failed as a result of poor foundations beneath the surface layer so it is not just a question of putting some asphalt on top of it, what we have actually got to do is actually dig down to the foundations, stabilise them, rebuild them and of course that takes time and it is inevitably something that is disruptive for the traffic. As I was saying earlier on in response to Cllr. Clarke, one of the options might have been to build a contraflow scheme through the works but it would have been something that took much longer and with of course I believe far greater disruption than having clearly marked diversion, with marshals at either end on site with arrangements for people to get in and out of their residences and businesses and meet out access. I think it has been going the way that is appropriate for the scale of what is needed and in a way that will minimise the disruption but inevitably will not do away with it entirely.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Porter: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. My supplementary question is, local residents and local businesses are very concerned about the lack of consultation, there was no discussion with anybody, I myself e.mailed the Mayor I think two or three times to ask what was going on and I never received a response until after the decision had been made. Earlier on he did mention that there had been a lot of notice issued and people had been given as much notice as possible, but in terms of businesses around there and residents around there as much notice as possible is pretty useless if you have not got the passing trade which you were once reliant upon in order to keep your business going. So my question to the City Mayor is in terms of this proposals is there still an opportunity to rethink this because at the moment it is going to cause major disruption not just to the businesses but to the local residents who have not been given the full picture about what is happening, they just understand that they will be able to get access and egress but it is not the case at all it has turned into a one way system, residents will not be able to get out of the top end, people who live at the top end of Lutterworth Road will have to go out towards Fosse Park then go all the way back along Glenhills Way and then come back along Aylestone Drive and then back down Wigston Lane in order to get down to the shops at the bottom of the road, so my question is. is there still an opportunity for the Council to rethink this because the decision at the moment is not really acceptable?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, I have said on a couple of occasions to Cllr. Clarke already and to Cllr. Porter that I do acknowledge that there will be disruption associated with this but I just wonder whether Cllr. Porter is seriously suggesting that it would be better to take at least twice as long and prolong that disruption for those who live and work and have their businesses in the area, or to get it done in the shortest possible time. Now, I am firmly convinced and I'm sure that residents and businesses will see the benefit of it that getting it done and getting it done and out of the way during the summer holiday period when the schools are not around and traffic is much more limited does make very good sense and I actually do want to pay tribute to the officers concerned because on this occasion they have gone to considerable lengths to make sure that people know about it in advance, to make sure there are decent arrangements for publicising and responding to particular needs and for making sure that during that work that people on site were able to

help with any further difficulties as they emerge. My Lord Mayor I believe that the way in which this has been approached is the model of good practice and I very much hope that Cllr. Porter will recognise that and also hope that like me he recognises that while this scheme does cause disruption it is one that undoubtedly of benefit to all concerned.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, question number 20

Cllr. Porter: Thank you Lord Mayor. How is the lane closure in Newarke Street easing congestion?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor the closure of a lane to traffic on Newarke Street is part of the Connecting Leicester project and will extend the pedestrian area from New Walk along Newarke Street to De Montfort University. What it will do is to provide high quality pedestrian and cycling between the City Centre and the University and indeed beyond there to residential areas to the west of the City Centre. It will also provide improved links with the national cycle routes that run through the City, one of which actually follows that road. I do believe it will encourage walking and cycling which will of course have beneficial effects on health, have good environmental effects and also help to reduce air pollution if less journeys are ultimately made by car. I think also that particular link has the important effect of helping the links between the modern and the historic parts of the former town and the present City Centre, and I am very grateful to the government for the encouragement that it has given to this scheme and indeed not just the concept but also the substantial financial support that has been given to enable it to proceed.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Porter do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Porter: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. My supplementary is, he is talking about ultimately he hopes that there will be less journeys made by car. I mean this was exactly the same thing about the proposed bus lanes on the A426 Lutterworth Road and once he was challenged by myself and local residents he quickly backed off when he was unable to produce any evidence. The question was is how is he going to ease congestion. He did not answer it. I would like him to tell us now how this proposal is going to lead to and where is the evidence that there will be less journeys taken by car.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I haven't made that argument either with regard to the A426 or with regard to this particular link here. What I have argued with regard to the A426 and you have heard me again this evening is that it of benefit to all road users, I won't go through them all again but I have argued it both in public and here in this Council chamber and again would argue with regard to this, that it is of significant benefit to pedestrians, significant benefit to cyclists, particularly helps to connect the modern retail half of the City to the historic old town and it is something that is very significantly making a contribution to the quality environment in the City. I think it is also interesting that when during the experimental period our officers had monitored the effects of the temporary road closure, they had seen only minor changes to flow and congestion during the period and certainly nothing of such significance as to outweigh the very considerable benefits that we will get from it.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, question number 21

Cllr. Porter: Thank you again Lord Mayor. Since May 2011 how much has the Council paid in pension contributions for elected Members?

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am arranging for Cllr. Porter to have a total of the amounts contributed by the Council to the pension scheme on behalf of elected members. I did actually have a quick calculation of it and I understand it represents 0.13% of the total pension bill. While I understand it is a figure that Cllr. Porter might be interested in but I would actually suggest that perhaps there are rather more important issues to be pursuing.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Porter: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. It is interesting he knows what percentage it was 0.13% of the total pension bill, but he does not know the figure. I am disappointed that he does not know the figure. My supplementary question is does he have that figure available to him and did he have the figure available to him before this meeting took place this evening?

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor, I will be frank with members of the Council. I had an 'e' mail which I have not quite got my head round in its entirety. It arrived I think during the afternoon, yes 1.35pm, and I picked out from there that percentage but I will happily share with Cllr. Porter and indeed other Members of the Council, the rest of the content of the 'e' mail and I am sure somewhere buried within it is the figure that he is asking for.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, question number 22

Cllr. Porter: Thank you again Lord Mayor. My question is what active steps are the Council taking to promote equality and diversity in the City?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Sood.

Cllr. Sood: Thank you my Lord Mayor. The City Mayor and I settled the Council's approach to promoting equality and diversity in the City in the recent launch of the Council's revised equality and diversity strategy held in the Town Hall on 24th May. All Members were invited to the launch, those members who attended were able to see that a great amount of our services actively support a diverse range of needs of our communities and our residents and the support available from each of our 7 employee groups to promote and improve the quality of outcomes for our staff. But Cllr. Porter did not attend you did not even send your apologies. The equality and diversity strategy includes an action plan which sets out the actions we are taking to improve our ability to promote equality and diversity in the City. Overview Select Committee has recently agreed to consider a quarterly monitoring report of those actions to keep track of the steps being taken and the outcomes they achieve and we will update this action plan on an annual basis. At the launch my Lord Mayor we also introduced an equality and diversity charter which sets out the key actions all of us working for the Council will undertake on a daily basis to promote equality and diversity. The charter has been posted in Council buildings and facilities to remind staff and residents of what they should expect from us. Presentations on census results, new welfare reforms, HR were well received. To accompany the launch we produced a quick reference guide for embedding equality and diversity in our work and the guide sets out the key things that we should all know about in carrying out our day to day work for the residents as well as the main tools we have developed for use to help us in this way. As Cllr. Porter says, what active steps we are taking, we are taking every step to promote equality and diversity. My Lord Mayor before the elections even our manifesto pledge was on the equality and diversity strengths. City Mayor, Cabinet and all my colleagues on this side they are 100% committed to

the equality and diversity agenda. If you go through our department's CYPS Childrens Services, Surestart, Family Centres, new schools, Looked After Children, significant improvement in the attainments of our children and child poverty. The Deputy City Mayor has been to 2 conferences on that and we are working with our partners. Neighbourhood Services – there is a huge review going on how we are improving our neighbourhood services to serve our local communities. Adult services, tackling health inequalities, housing and the service cuts these new welfare reforms are having on our vulnerable residents and families. Introduction of living wage, environment, carbon reduction, even my Lord Mayor, Her Majesty the Queen during her 60th anniversary selected Leicester as her first visit and because at the City Council we have got a language unit which caters for 110 languages in the City and we have got so many festivals which are supported by the local authority, and because of this diversity and equality we are very proud that we have been shortlisted as a Culture City of UK 2017. And these festivals like Diwali, Caribbean Carnival, Party in the Park and music festivals they are second to none in the country. Even the Prime Minister, David Cameron, in the House of Commons he has mentioned about Belgrave as well being part of that as well. Diwali is best celebrated in Leicester. Recently we had Eric Pickles here and he walked on the Golden Mile and, although I know he did not give us the money we asked for, he was so impressed with the diversity of the City. Lord Mayor, so far as culture is concerned on 13th September an Oscar nominated film is going to be released called Jadoo and our local MPs, and I think the City Mayor, will be in that film, and that has been produced and directed by our local artist who was born and bred on Belgrave Road. Look at the heritage, sport, art, Curve, even in civic life. Lord Mayor you and I, we are good examples here in the Chamber and I will say that, on this side of the Council the various working with all voluntary organisations, City Partnership Board, which is chaired by the City Mayor, and we are working with external departments, we are listening to them as to how we can improve our services. Lord Mayor every report has equality impact assessment attached to it and annually the City Council Budget is scrutinised by external scrutinisers and last time we were given such a good compliment that Leicester are the only one authority in five authorities who take equality and diversity so seriously. But unfortunately yesterday further service cuts were announced and it is going to put more pressure on us but we are committed to our front line services according to the needs of our citizens.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Porter do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Porter: Thank you Lord Mayor. I would like to thank the Assistant Mayor for that very full and detailed answer. I welcome it but Assistant Mayors and members of the Council are willing to give a full explanation and I think they should all do it in actual fact and apologies for not making it to your meeting. I don't know where I was but obviously I give my apologies now. I am pleased to hear that as the Assistant Mayor said 100% of the Labour Group are committed to equality and diversity. I have got a good idea which would promote equality in the City. The City Council make an apology for the dreadful poster that they sent to Uganda telling the people who were fleeing persecution not to come to Leicester. There are over 10,000 people who fled persecution in Uganda who came and made their home in this City. They have made a major contribution to this City so my question to the Assistant Mayor is will she please join me in calling on the Council to make a full apology. Thank you Lord Mayor.

City Mayor: If I might intervene to answer that question, my Lord Mayor. That event to which Cllr. Porter refers was back in 1973. It was before anybody in this chamber was elected to the City Council. Lord Mayor I have been asked before

whether I would say sorry for that, whether I would say sorry to the Ugandan Asians who ignored the advert and came to Leicester regardless. Thank you Lord Mayor, I don't feel any need to apologise for something that was before any of us were actually present. What I do feel the need to do is not to take the one word sorry but to say two words. Thank you.

Cllr. Porter: My Lord Mayor the question was for an apology for the poster, not to the people coming here.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Sood

Cllr. Sood: The City Mayor has answered and on the other hand the Ugandan Asians in fact don't want an apology in fact they are very, very grateful for the authorities and how they have been welcomed and the way services have been delivered, this is why they had a thanksgiving service. And Lord Mayor I said before that Cllr. Porter did not attend the launch, I have brought these copies of the documents tabled at the launch for him.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cole, question number 23

Cllr. Cole: Thank you Lord Mayor. I am not sure how best to follow that but I will ask my question if I may. When analysing the data for the performance of City children studying in secondary school, the analysis shows quite clearly that children living and studying in the City perform far better than those children living in the City and studying outside of the City. Can the Assistant City Mayor for C&YP tell us what is being done to promote this brilliant news in the City, especially for parents who are inclined to send their children outside of the City to study?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Dempster.

Cllr. Dempster: Yes, thank you very much for this question. Again I think it is a very, very important issue. For a number of years up until about 7 years ago we were not doing well in the league tables, we were not doing well for our young people. Year on year that position has been transformed. It is much more difficult to get that message out and get people to hear that message and act on that message but in actual fact the best thing that they can do for their child is to go to a City school. In actual fact we are doing quite a lot to try and get that message out on a drip by drip consistent basis. So one of the things is that we actually commission a short film entitled "Leicester Schools have changed – want to know how" and that is being circulated to schools to use with parents and it is also being uploaded on to You Tube so those of you who are technologically minded might want to get on to You Tube and have a look at that. We are also very proactive with the press office engaging with the local media to get the good news stories out particularly around the Ofsted results for individual schools and we have had some very positive coverage but clearly we always want to do more. So I have been speaking to officers about this and about the role that Cllrs, and Ward Community meetings can play in getting this message out and so in the autumn term when the new set of results come out we are going to be preparing some locality briefings so that we can have meetings with local councillors and give them the data for their locality, they can get that out at all the events that they are attending, at their Ward Community meetings and it is just another way of getting that message out. There is no one single way that we can sort of bust the myth that actually it is better to go to the County. It is about doing it consistently in lots of different ways and that is what we are doing.

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Cole, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Cole: Just a comment Lord Mayor. Could I encourage the Assistant City Mayor then to ensure that she does get to my Ward that is the Western Park Ward because a lot of parents over the years have spent a great deal of money bussing their children outside of the City to other schools and clearly if the report is suggesting that they are wasting their money then we need to make it quite clear to them that they could spend their money more wisely, Lord Mayor.

Cllr. Dempster: Yes, absolutely. I mean yesterday I actually had a meeting with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors from Fullhurst and earlier in the week I was having a conversation with the Chair of Governors at New College. Both of those schools would be excellent secondary schools for the Western Park ward, within walking distance and I visited both those schools recently, spoke to staff and Chairs of Governors and I know what excellent schools they are. So yes absolutely agree with you Cllr. Cole.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cole, question number 24

Cllr. Cole: I wonder if the Assistant City Mayor can tell us please what support the Council is giving to outstanding schools in our City to ensure that they remain outstanding, and to other schools to help them become outstanding, given that there is significant cutbacks across her portfolio, that is financial cut backs?

Lord Mayor: Cllr. Dempster.

Cllr. Dempster: Thank you very much for that and we are hugely aspirational for every single child in every single school in this City and one of the things that we do do is that we have an annual performance dialogue. So members of staff from Learning Services go in to the individual school and have a discussion with that school identifying best practice. That then gives us as a local authority the opportunity to pick up on best practice but also then when we are going round to other schools to disseminate that best practice and get best value for the work that is being done. So we also have some very specific programs so we have four knowledge transfer centres across the City and that is a school where there is consistently good to outstanding teaching and the learning of reading. So what we need to do is build on the good practice that there is and you know that actually does not actually cost that much money. We have an excellent although small learning services department. They engage with the schools on an individual basis, pick up that best practice and it is the role then of the local authority to be able to share that best practice and encourage that partnership between schools. So we do see that we very definitely have a role as a local authority in encouraging best practice dissemination across all our schools. I don't like to refer back to an earlier question, but here exactly is the very reason why schools should not go to academy status because there is a huge role for the local authority in helping schools to drive up standards so long as they remain part of the family of schools within the local authority.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cole, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Cole: Just to thank the Assistant City Mayor my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Westley, question number 25

Cllr. Westley: I would like to thank the Mayor for sorting out the burnt out

dilapidated building on Home Farm Square in Beaumont Leys and ask him to confirm his continued support for the outer estate. My Lord Mayor obviously this building has taken quite a few years to sort out and the Mayor got involved and it was sorted out within a few months and I would like to thank him.

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I really do thank Cllr. Westley for asking this question because of course inevitably the media and some do indeed tend to focus on things that happen in the City Centre, and of course the reality is that only a small proportion of our services are provided in the City Centre. Only a small proportion of our activities are in the City Centre and only a small proportion of our funding is in the City Centre. Earlier on we were on about investment in schools for example, hundreds and millions in secondary schools, tens of millions in primary schools and around the communities. We talked about adult social care it is out and round in the City, housing by its very nature is out and round in the City and of course neighbourhood services well it's all there in the title because that it out and around in neighbourhoods. I think this does give an opportunity really to talk about the fact that we do have issues across the City that we need to be aware of, we need to be responding to. This one really is a classic example. Obviously I am grateful to what Cllr. Westley has said about my role in it but actually it was the Ward Councillors who raised the issue and who said look we have got something here that needs sorting. The long lease on this building, owners nowhere around, it was just an eyesore and a pain and it had been vandalised and needed to be sorted. I was pleased that we were able to respond to that and if I can just repay the compliment just to say that he and his colleagues in Beaumont Leys Ward saw a problem on behalf of the people that they represent and made sure that I and the administration of the Council was aware of it and we were able to do something about it.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Westley, do you have a supplementary?

Cllr. Westley: Yes my Lord Mayor. I think there has been lessons to be learned here with long leases, especially we have a lot of shops on the outer estates right across the City and where long leases and the time it takes officers and when the leaseholder disappears abroad it takes a lot of legal time and resources to chase up and serve those notices to take buildings back and can I ask the Mayor to make sure that we look at this because this is a classic example of where there are lessons to be learned in long leases across this City.

City Mayor: Thank you Lord Mayor. I think Cllr. Wesley is right to be concerned about long leases but I think there is rather a different lesson to be drawn from this one and actually it is that the Council when it has issues of this sort ought not to be timid. Whether it is the ultimate owners of the freehold as was the case here or indeed as the enforcers in other situations about planning powers or our licencing powers or whatever it might be we do need to be prepared to actually go in there and use the full extent of our powers. This is one where after a bit of encouragement officers were able to take a bit of a risk to go in and use their powers as the owners of the freehold but I am delighted that they did that and I will certainly be encouraging them in similar circumstances in the future to use their powers and not just to sit around and allow what was undoubtedly a nuisance and an eyesore to continue without intervention.

REPORTS OF EXECUTIVE

Provision of Community Care Assessment Services for People who Misuse Substances

A report was submitted which sought acceptance of a delegated function from Leicestershire and Rutland County Councils.

Moved by Councillor R Patel, seconded by Councillor Moore and carried:

12. That Council approve the delegation to the Council of a social care function by Leicestershire and Rutland County Councils of their community care assessment and care management arrangements for people who misuse substances from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2016.

REPORTS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Scrutiny Annual Report

Councillor Cassidy (Chair of Overview Select Committee 2012-13) submitted a report which gave details of the work of Scrutiny during 2012-13.

Moved by Councillor Cassidy, seconded by Councillor Joshi and carried:

13. That Council notes and endorses the work of Scrutiny during 2012-13.

REPORTS OF REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Appointment of Head of Paid Service

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by the Deputy City Mayor and carried:

14. That Council agrees to the appointment of Andrew Keeling as the Chief Operating Officer and Head of Paid Service.

EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

Moved by the Councillor Clayton, seconded by Councillor Cooke and carried:

15. That under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 35 (a) (i) Council agree that the size of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission be increased by one Member.

NOTICES OF MOTION

None received.

Close of Meeting

The Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.05pm.

