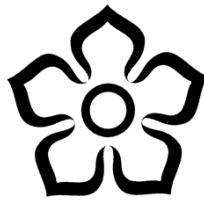


Thursday, 18 June 2015



Leicester
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Thursday, 18 JUNE 2015 duly convened for the business hereunder mentioned.

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BUSINESS

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1. **LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meetings held on 25th February 2015 are available to view at <http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/documents/g6770/Printed%20minutes%20Wednesday%2025-Feb-2015%2017.01%20Council.pdf?T=1> and 21 May 2015 are available to view at:
<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=6789&Ver=4>

Copies are also available from Democratic Support on (0116) 454 6350 or Committees@leicester.gov.uk.

4. **PETITIONS**
 - Presented by Members of the Public
 - Presented by Councillors
5. **QUESTIONS**
 - From Members of the Public
 - From Councillors
6. **REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**
 - 6.1 Revisions to the Constitution
7. **ESTABLISHMENT OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS, REGULATORY & COUNCIL COMMITTEES MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**
8. **ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

9. **EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

To note any changes to the Executive. To vary the composition and fill any vacancies of any Committee of Council.

10. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

11. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Filming and Recording the Meeting

The Council is committed to transparency and supports efforts to record and share reports of proceedings of public meetings through a variety of means, including social media. In accordance with government regulations and the Council's policy, persons and press attending any meeting of the Council open to the public (except Licensing Sub Committees and where the public have been formally excluded) are allowed to record and/or report all or part of that meeting. Details of the Council's policy are available at www.leicester.gov.uk or from Democratic Support.

If you intend to film or make an audio recording of a meeting you are asked to notify the relevant Democratic Support Officer in advance of the meeting to ensure that participants can be notified in advance and consideration given to practicalities such as allocating appropriate space in the public gallery etc.

The aim of the Regulations and of the Council's policy is to encourage public interest and engagement so in recording or reporting on proceedings members of the public are asked:

- ✓ to respect the right of others to view and hear debates without interruption;
- ✓ to ensure that the sound on any device is fully muted and intrusive lighting avoided;
- ✓ where filming, to only focus on those people actively participating in the meeting;
- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

PRESENT:

TED CASSIDY, LORD MAYOR
CHAIRMAN

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

HARSHAD DAHYABHAI BHAVSAR
ANNETTE BYRNE
VIJAY SINGH RIYAIT

Aylestone Ward

ADAM CLARKE
NIGEL CARL PORTER

Beaumont Leys Ward

HEMANT RAE BHATIA
SUE WADDINGTON
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

Belgrave Ward

MANSUKLAL CHOHAN
MANJULA SOOD
JOHN THOMAS

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields

STEVE CORRALL
ELAINE HALFORD
KULWINDER SINGH JOHAL

Castle Ward

PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK
DEBORAH ANNE SANGSTER
LYNN SENIOR

Evington Ward

DEEPAK BAJAJ
RATILAL BHAGWAN GOVIND

Eyres Monsell Ward

VIRGINIA CLEAVER
RORY PALMER

North Evington Ward

LUIS FONSECA
JEAN KHOTE
ABDUL RAZAK OSMAN

Rushey Mead Ward

PIARA SINGH CLAIR
ROSS WILLMOTT

Saffron Ward

ELLY CUTKELVIN
WILLIAM SHELTON

Spinney Hills Ward

SHOFIQL ISLAM CHOWDHURY
MUSTAFA MALIK

Stoneygate Ward

LUCY CHAPLIN
KIRK MASTER
AMINUR THALUKDAR

Thurncourt Ward

TERESA ALDRED
PAUL NEWCOMBE

Troon Ward

DIANE CANK
BALJIT SINGH

Westcotes Ward

ANDY CONNELLY
SARAH RUSSELL

Fosse Ward

DAWN ALFONSO

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RASHMI JOSHI
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Knighton Ward

ROSS GRANT
INDERJIT SINGH GUGNANI
DR LYNN MOORE

Western Ward

DR SUSAN BARTON
GEORGE COLE
MALCOLM UNSWORTH

Wycliffe Ward

HANIF AQBANY
MOHAMMED DAWOOD

LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord Mayor noted that his chaplain Rev'd Canon Alison Adams had not been able to attend this meeting but would be present at the next Council meeting.

The Lord Mayor informed Council that his Civic Service would be held on Sunday 5 July 2015 at 3pm at the Cathedral. Members would be receiving an invitation in due course.

The Lord Mayor informed Council that a group of young athletes would shortly be travelling from Leicester to Netherlands to take part in the International Children's Games and joined with the Assistant City Mayor Piara Singh Clair in wishing them well.

The Lord Mayor wished all Muslim Councillors and all those in the City observing the holy month of Ramadan a peaceful and blessed Ramadan.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Lord Mayor invited the Monitoring Officer to give advice in relation to declarations concerning item 6 on the agenda 'Revisions to the Constitution'.

The Monitoring Officer advised that within item 6 were a number of proposed changes to the Council's Constitution, including the Contract Procedure Rules. By and large these changes reflected legislative amendments and changes to thresholds but also comprised other operational changes.

The Monitoring Officer stated that broadly speaking he was of the view that it was unlikely that participation of those Members in chamber would be affected by the need to declare interests and that even if a Member or their partner or close associates had contracts or hoped in the near future to have contracts with the Council, nothing that would be decided at the meeting would be specific enough to trigger an interest. The Monitoring Officer noted that the Members Register of Interests acted as a publically accountable record of business or other connections with the Council and would not need re-declaring at this meeting. Where it came to specific contracts, section 14 of the Contract Procedure Rules within the Constitution provided guidance on Member duties where they had, or may be perceived to have, an "interest".

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

No declarations were made.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

7. That the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 25 February 2015 and the meeting held on 21 May 2015, copies having been circulated to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record.

PETITIONS

Councillor Bajaj presented a petition with 327 signatures in the following terms:

“We, the undersigned residents of Evington, Leicester request Leicester City Council install a Pedestrian Crossing on Spencefield Lane opposite St Paul’s Catholic School and Krishna Avanti Primary School for the safety of school children and vulnerable adults crossing the road every day especially during the rush hour. That the Leicester City Council should implement these measures without delay.”

The Lord Mayor stated that under Council Procedure Rule 13a the aforementioned petition would be referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.

QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Lord Mayor: First of all questions from members of the public. Ms. Carlym Quantrill.

Ms. Quantrill: Thank you Lord Mayor. May I please first explain why I am here asking the questions, I am asking on behalf of people who are members of the gypsy and travelling community but who do not feel confident to come along and engage with this process on a personal level. May I also make quick reference to the fact that there are three petitions that they have submitted raising their concerns about the usage of CCTV cameras on Meynell’s Gorse, Redhill site and Greengate site, and I may well be asked to come here and read those out to full Council at a later date. My first question I believe has now been answered by Andy Connelly – just looking... yes, cool. Can you please tell me the Council’s plans to provide city wide official gypsy and traveller sites in order to meet the needs of members of this community and to enable them to maintain their traditional lifestyle and culture as much as possible please?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor. In response to the question, clearly the Chamber will be aware that we have just opened two new sites, one a Redhill and one at Greengate Lane providing 16 extra new pitches and we are in the process, we have just completed the refurbishment of the Meynell’s Gorse site. The gypsy and travellers’ needs assessment produced jointly with the districts in 2013 says that we have a 5 year need for a further 30 permanent sites and transit sites. The local plan examinations are presently ongoing and clearly we will see if we can identify, through the local plan, any opportunity for further sites including a transit site.

Lord Mayor: Ms. Quantrill have you a supplementary question?

Ms. Quantrill: There is a question yes. If I could ask Councillor Connelly if he could please give an assurance that with any new sites that actual members of the gypsy and traveller community themselves are consulted on the layout and functioning of any new sites and not Council officers or other alleged

representatives please.

Councillor Connelly: In respect of Meynell's Gorse we consulted with residents on the site and as a result we amended our proposals. In respect of Redhill and Greengate Lane, the difficulty we had in respect of consulting with residents was that at that time we had no residents because they were new sites. So I am not sure exactly who we were supposed to consult with in respect that we were not aware of who the residents would be until they got allocated their pitches on those two sites. But clearly if we are in a position to identify new sites and we know who those residents will be, we will clearly consult with them. I think it is a shame that having built the two new sites at considerable cost both with funding from the homes and community agency and from local council tax payers, that there are attempts within the City to denigrate the work that we have done in providing 16 new pitches and I do recall four years of Conservative /Liberal Democrat administration in this Council chamber produced absolutely no new pitches at all.

Ms. Quantrill: Please don't count me as a Lib/Dem any more, I have wised up Councillor Connelly.

Lord Mayor: Can you please ask your second question.

Ms. Quantrill: Yes certainly. Can Councillor Connelly please explain why the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that was led by Cllr Waddington to wide acclaim that looked into the Greengate and Red Hill sites, as you say are now open, were by and large ignored or if not when these recommendations will be implemented please?

Councillor Connelly: Firstly, I would refute that those recommendations are being ignored. We have implemented as many of those recommendations as we have been able to at this time, those two new sites were only recently opened and further recommendations will be acted upon over the forthcoming months. We have a new management team, we have new residents, there is a relationship to be built between that management team and those new residents, and as previously stated we will be bringing a report back to the Housing Scrutiny Commission in November with a progress report in respect of those recommendations and obviously members of the public are welcome to attend that Scrutiny Commission.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Ms. Quantrill do you have a supplementary question?

Ms. Quantrill: Yes I do Lord Mayor. Until my involvement with the building of Greengate and Redhill sites I thought I had an intellectual understanding of the concept of institutionalised racism. I have now witnessed it in practice and experienced it on an emotional level which is deeply distressing. Can I ask Councillor Connelly what measures he will take to combat this starting with this chamber, the Council as a whole and what influence he will use to address this issue with partner agencies, other organisations and indeed members of the public? You may want to bat that back to Sir Peter because I'm not sure you are capable of answering.

Councillor Connelly: Well my response to that will be if you have evidence of what you are alleging in the Chamber by all means provide it to us and we will provide a written response.

Ms. Quantrill: OK. By which means do I do that Councillor?

Lord Mayor: Mr. Ilyas Ebrahim.

Mr. Ebrahim: Thank you. My question is how does the Admissions Section communicate with parents when they fail to secure a school for a child within a reasonable distance from the child's home?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Mr. Ebrahim for bringing this question to the Council. Where we are unable to offer a place at the parent's preferred school or schools we will write to parents letting them know and offering them a place in the nearest alternative school that has got places available. We ask the parents to then contact the school within 10 days to discuss taking up that place. Where we do have to refuse parents a place at their preferred school, we offer them a right of appeal against that decision. However, we do advise parents that where they would be appealing for a place in an infant class, the grounds for appeal are quite limited. When we write to parents refusing places we include a telephone number for parents to ring for further advice and where the Admissions staff are concerned the parents may not understand the process or they have difficulty getting children to more than one school, they can refer them to the Choice Advice Service either to offer telephone support or to visit the parents' home to discuss suitable alternative schools.

Lord Mayor: Mr. Ebrahim do you have a supplementary question?

Mr. Ebrahim: Yes I do yes. What happens in the instance where we need to actually contact the Admissions Team and actually discuss specific issues with them as in the number is there but there is a waiting time of about 45 minutes and when you do eventually get through to somebody there you get a response of 'all the parents are in the same position, we will get in touch with you' because I mean there is an instance where initially parents get a letter which states that the application has been received but we are unable to offer a placement at this time. This happened in March in this instance. You don't hear anything so you get worried so then you contact them and then they say all the parents, everybody is in the same boat we will get in touch with you. Em, nobody gets in touch so you send an email. Nobody responds to emails either. Eventually you know you have to get the Councillors involved to actually ask these questions which we should not have to do really. And it is funny that because since submitting this question for this meeting today I have had a letter dated 12th June and it was sent out on the 15th which is the date which I presented the question. It is a coincidence that is fine but we have been offered a school 3.7 miles away and.

Lord Mayor: Mr. Ebrahim I don't think we can discuss an individual case here.

Mr. Ebrahim: I appreciate that but I am just making people aware that there is a situation.

Lord Mayor: You have made your point and your question, do you want the Councillor to respond?

Mr. Ebrahim: Right OK.

Councillor Russell: Thank you for that and I agree that where people have to wait for that length of time that isn't OK and there is work ongoing to look at our admissions service and to improve the ways that the parents can contact them and

to be able to address some of the concerns that you have raised. We are looking at a number of different ways of doing that and in improving that service. It is also worth saying so that the Chamber is aware that there is a difference between parents who are applying as part of the traditional routes for starting reception, transferring to junior school and so on to secondary school. Firstly those that apply in-year for a place for whatever reason – they may have moved to the area, they may have decided to change schools, and the process then is slightly different. I think that may be what Mr. Ebrahim is referring to because then there is often a greater difficulty because, as I am sure you will understand, the majority of our schools are at capacity and therefore when we are looking at in-year placements that can sometimes take longer to address. But very happy to take up the issues you have raised and we are aware that the service does need to make improvements.

Mr. Ebrahim: So you would be happy to enter into a discussion about this particular issue with me and give me some assistance or your officers provide assistance.

Lord Mayor: Can you move to your second question please, sorry we can't have a debate, it's your question and then you get an opportunity for a supplementary.

Mr. Ebrahim: OK thank you. Sorry about that. My second question is why has there been a catastrophic lack of forward planning by the Education Department around adequate availability of spaces for children in the City, what exactly is being done about this current crisis?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Anybody who has read the national press over the last few days will know that there is a national difficulty within ensuring there are sufficient school places. There has been a degree of planning around this in the City Council over a number of years and until this point £27m has been spent securing over 3,845 additional primary places, and then another 355 within this year as additional places as well. That is not a lack of forward planning. That is round trying to make sure that places are available and where they are needed. I fully recognise that there still needs to be additional school places. We are absolutely committed to providing those both in the primary sector but also recognising the increasing pressure on the secondary schools in the City. It is a very, very complex process sadly because we are not just planning for children who come in at the start of each of those periods, we are planning for children who join us part way through the year who move to the City and that isn't a very straight forward picture. It does constantly change and is something that we are working on all year round. So additional school places are being secured all the time. In the last couple of weeks we have another 60 places secured by working with schools to change around their internal configurations to enable them to admit additional whole classes. These are fairly difficult, often you want to provide significant extensions, many of our schools with it being the City Centre are often very closely related to housing and it is not possible to add on the sort of extensions that we may wish and we have to be a bit more creative in the way that we do that, but I can assure you we are absolutely committed to continuing to provide additional school places so that every child in the City can attend a good or an outstanding school where they want to go.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Have you a supplementary question?

Mr. Ebrahim: I do yes thank you. What are the officers looking after these cases, what are they offering parents currently in this situation whereby they have got schools literally next door to them but they are being sent out four miles out of their location, and you have got schools in the vicinity, immediate vicinity, which are absolutely full and you know parents are being sent three miles, four miles out and it is absolutely impossible from a logistic perspective when their other children are actually going to these schools. So are the officers willing to engage with these cases and actually discuss this with parents who are worried out the future of where their children are going to be placed. Some of them may end up with just home schooling because it is just not possible to actually get them to a school, and if so, if worst case scenario parents have to send their children out to a school four miles out, is any transport going to be provided. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Where for infant school age, so up to 8 years, where a child's place in a school is over two miles away from their home a pass for both parent and child is provided for their transport needs. But we try and do a little bit more than that recognising particularly where one family has children in different schools we will work both with the schools through the Choice Adviser and also where possible with parents to look at what other provision is available. So looking at where there is extended schools within the provision being offered so that they may be have breakfast care or an after care option, recognising that where you are doing different drop offs that sometimes that can help with some of the logistics of what you are doing. We recognise it isn't ideal and we would always want siblings to be placed together if that was the parent's choice, it is one of the reasons we are looking at asking the admissions forum to put sibling ranking higher up when we are looking at admissions. It is one of a number of things we are looking to do to address this and to try and make sure that parents don't have the difficulty that you are having. But we will do whatever we can to support parents to ensure that their children are able to receive their education with the minimum impact. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Thank you Mr. Ebrahim.

Mr. Ebrahim: Thank you.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Lord Mayor: Questions from Councillors. Councillor Riyait.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. What progress has been made to address the issues highlighted in the recent OFSTED report regarding children's services following the Scrutiny Meeting that was held prior to the election.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Riyait for the question. This is an absolute priority for us, we have established an improvement board with an independent chair with representatives from and approved by the Department for Education and this involves both myself and senior officers but crucially partner agencies from around the local area who have worked together putting together an action plan to respond to each and every point raised on the OFSTED report and we are about to submit that for approval to the

Department for Education who will then monitor that over the coming months. I have invited all Members to a briefing session next Wednesday where we can share the detail of that and work through each of those recommendations, what actions we are looking at taking, how those actions will be evidenced, what outcomes we expect those changes to have for children in our City and to have a discussion about how that can be monitored via the scrutiny process in the coming months. It is worth me saying to Members that this is not an overnight process. It is a long term process. It is around getting in real and consolidated change in areas so that we make sure that we do not fail children in our City. We welcome the scrutiny from local Members and think that that will add to the process and I very much look forward to Members being able to see a full draft action plan and then receiving their comments.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Riyait do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Riyait: Can I just welcome the briefing that Councillor Russell has set up for next week and hope that she will continue to involve the widest group of Councillors as possible in this issue. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: I don't think that was a question so I won't ask you to come back after it. Can I have your second question Councillor Riyait.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. The previous Assistant Mayor for Children's Services committed to setting up a play commission in partnership with Play England. Is the current Assistant Mayor committed to this?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Yes. Thank you Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait do you have a supplementary? Councillor Riyait can we have your third question please.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. What has been the progress made and the issues discussed by the independent Adult Social Care Commission set up by the previous Assistant Mayor. Will the Deputy Mayor continue with the independent Adult Social Care Commission?

Lord Mayor: Deputy City Mayor.

Councillor Palmer : Thank you Lord Mayor. I met this morning with the chair of the Adult Social Care Commission. He was able to update me on the progress to date. The Commission has held two meetings in January and March of this year. I am grateful to the chair and members of the Commission who have given their time and their energy to that work so far. The chair and I were both in agreement that there is a need to find a way to have a broader public debate in the City about how we embrace both the challenges but also the opportunity of an ageing population in the City, and most crucially I think how we begin to encourage perhaps people in their 40s and 50s to think about their later years so we are able to prepare services and indeed our communities to meet their needs and aspirations for their later years. I made it clear this morning that if that Commission is to make a useful and valid contribution to that debate it needs to report sooner rather than later. So we would anticipate a report in the next few months and hopefully a process between now and then which will engage partners and the public in that discussion which

needs to take place.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Riyait have you a supplementary question?

Councillor Riyait: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. Can I ask what form that sort of wider public sort of debate will take? What form that will take, form basically? I think that is a really important issue. Thank you.

Councillor Palmer: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you for the supplementary question. I don't necessarily want to pre-empt what the Commission may determine by way of how to lead that debate, but I think there needs to be space for a conversation, a discussion that encourages people to come forward with their views for service providers and others to be sharing perhaps innovative and new ideas and new solutions. I think we need to make sure we utilise social media in that discussion to reach out as far as possible across the City's various networks and communities, and crucially that provider organisations and commissioners are involved, but most importantly service users of today and tomorrow are involved in that discussion. They are the sort of parameters and objectives I would set the Commission in framing that conversation but I don't think it is for me this evening to pre-empt what that might look like in detail.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Move to question 4 Councillor Singh.

Councillor Singh: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Will the Assistant Mayor for Public Health comment on the recent disturbing revelations regarding the figures that Black and Asian communities suffer disproportionately a higher level of neo-natal deaths in the City.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Osman.

Councillor Osman: Thank you Councillor Baljit Singh for raising that. The work was carried out by Leicester University who published the report last week on the numbers of babies that were born across the UK. The figures in Leicester were not known to us and in relation to the specific question raised about mortality rate amongst the black and ethnic minority numbers. Around Leicester we had 32 babies unfortunately die each year in late pregnancy in the first month of their life. This is a personal tragedy for every family. We do not have the local figures as I mentioned but I think what we are looking at is the areas, what they did find was that poor areas in the City had high numbers and this was not related to the black and ethnic minority populations. Although poverty is the single biggest factor to be able to link the infant deaths due to the number of these infant mortalities and we are looking into areas of work around this area.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Councillor Osman. Do you have a supplementary question Councillor Singh?

Councillor Singh: Yes my Lord Mayor I do. Can I say that I am grateful to the Assistant Mayor for giving that information, but in view of the fact that this is probably the first time the public health functions are going to be under the Council, and bearing in mind of course the recent statement by the Chancellor of nearly £200m cuts that he is going to make outside the NHS budget, it seems to me that we need to protect as much as possible the public health responsibilities and service delivery from this Council, particularly in regards to the health inequalities that exist which we know historically. I trust that the Assistant Mayor will continue to

be vigilant in this area and ensure that we do in fact safeguard the delivery of these very important services.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Osman.

Councillor Osman : Yes it is an appalling situation for the government to be able to tell us you know just after times when we are working towards our budgets and I know for a fact that the Deputy City Mayor the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board has written to the Minister inviting him to Leicester around the work that we have done in this area, but we have had no positive response in this field. I am not sure what the amount of budget that the government is asking us for and it is still yet to be made clear. But we are vigilant and we are cautious in relation to how we spend our budget in this area but having a priority in public health.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Councillor Osman. Question 5, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. What measures has the City Council taken to improve the health and wellbeing of staff to reduce the number of staff sick days?

Lord Mayor: Deputy City Mayor.

Councillor Palmer: Thank you my Lord Mayor and may I thank Councillor Chaplin for the question. We are involved in a number of measures to support staff maintaining good health and wellbeing both physical and mental. For the record none of those measures involve the purchase of water bottles or pedometers but we do have a range of effective activities ranging from workplace health fairs, midday mild organised walks, exercise programmes which staff can access. There is a mental health awareness event which I attended last month for staff. We have 30 workplace health champions in teams across the local authority with more staff volunteering to take on those roles later this year. Obviously reducing the number of days lost to sickness absence to the authority is a priority for us in terms of staff health and wellbeing but it is not the only reason we are engaged in those programmes, it is the responsible thing to do as an employer as well and we will continue to make it a priority, not just within our Human Resources function but across all teams and encourage departments and teams to be mindful of staff health and wellbeing and to engage in the wide range of activities that we are supporting and offering.

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

Councillor Chaplin: I do my Lord Mayor. Thank you. Thank you Councillor Palmer for the comprehensive answer, and you are right it is not just about reducing the number of sick days it is about supporting staff. What evaluation specially is there in monitoring of that and in terms of across the organisation. For instance I know that the Leicester Hospitals Trust has recently introduced a scheme of desks where people can stand because it is known, the evidence is there, that it is really bad for people to be sitting for hours on end, both mentally and physically. I think that this is something that perhaps would those reports about staff sickness days and the initiatives be something that could perhaps come to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission.

Lord Mayor: Deputy City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I would certainly welcome Members

taking an interest in this area, and particularly looking at the data. I was looking this morning at the aggregated data as to the reasons why people are off sick, looking at the different categories, and it is really important we do understand that so that we can map those interventions and activities directly against the trends. We are doing that. We will continue to do that. You identified one particular interesting example of standing desks. There are members of staff with standing desks across the authority and we need to make sure that good health and wellbeing is not something that we just promote and encourage through specific activities, but we make it part of business as usual and we have a healthy workplace as well. That is not just about standing desks, it is about access to fresh air, it is about social space for staff and that it something we are very aware of and want to make sure we have a healthy workplace as well as a healthy workforce.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Chaplin can you ask your question 6 please, number 6.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. As part of the connecting Leicester project and the plans to restore the carriage walk on Victoria Park, will the Council invest in an information board about the historic Evington footpath.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I am very grateful to Councillor Chapin for this question because the Evington footpath is perhaps something that many Members won't be particularly aware of. I am not going to give a long history lesson about it tonight because I know that at least one of the Assistant Mayors will get very cross with me if I do. But the fact is it does follow the line of the Roman road the Via Devana out from the City which ultimately becomes part of the Gartree Road and it is actually a Conservation Area. It was declared as such some years ago and in fact has been interpreted in the past and I was trying in preparation for the answer to this question to find the walk leaflet that the Council provided some years ago describing its history and some of the fascinating buildings along it. But I could not actually lay my hands on it so if any Members do actually come across it I would be very interested to see it. But I do believe it does deserve better interpretation at the very least perhaps return to reprinting that leaflet. But certainly I will look at the programme for interpretation boards and see whether that is the most appropriate way of interpreting it as it deserves our attention.

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

Councillor Chaplin: I do my Lord Mayor. Thank you very much. Thank you City Mayor. It is very heartening. I know residents in Stoneygate Ward, in particular that part of Stoneygate Ward, will be heartened that your interest in Evington footpath is as great as theirs. But I wonder if you would agree to come to Evington footpath conservation area to meet perhaps with me and my new co-Councillors who obviously represent the area, and speak with the residents because, much as it is historic it has become an area where there are issues that need to be tackled. It is something that needs to be looked at and I know that the residents there would very much like to talk to you about things to do with making sure that the area does retain its conservation status and is looked after, the interpretation board would be something nice and also making sure that the trees are looked after in the area.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I would be delighted to accept that invitation. It is

actually though an area I know well and I would be very happy to talk to the residents about it. I do know that as a result of discussion with residents in the past the Council did actually invest quite heavily in the area resurfacing much of the pavement and indeed restoring some of the back walls on to it. But I think perhaps the time has come for us to re-engage with the residents in that area and those who are concerned about it to ensure that it is kept up to the sort of standards that we achieved some years ago and I am well aware, because Councillor Chaplin has made me aware of it, that there are issues around a particular tree in the area as well as perhaps the foliage more generally and I am well aware of the representations that she has made to ensure that that tree is not lost to the area.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Question 7, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Obviously I understand that a member of the public, Mr. Ebrahim has kind of asked this question but if I could be much more specific if I may just slightly bear with me my Lord Mayor. What measures have been put in place to support parents who need to get children of primary school age to different schools across the City, often within the same family when a local school place is not available. If I could ask particularly about Stoneygate Ward the schools in that area. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Whilst I understand Councillor Chaplin asking specifically about Stoneygate I can assure all Members that the same principles will apply wherever parents live in the City, and as I answered earlier to Mr. Ebrahim to say that if children are placed in a schools, if they are up to 8 years old, over 2 miles away and after that over 3 miles away, a pass for both parent and child to be able to travel to that school will be given, but we will also crucially have those individual conversations with the schools and prior to offering places work through the choice adviser and with the potential schools that we are offering places at to see if there is additional wrap around facilities at that school or either of the schools that the children are able to attend so that you don't end up in a situation as a parent where you have to get both children there by five to nine and pick them both up within 15 minutes of 3pm. Recognising the practical impossibility of that. So that is the process we go through. It isn't ideal. I am not going to stand here and say that I think parents should have to travel across the City with their children to get them to different schools. It is a really, really difficult thing and you know the quicker we are able to bring school places on line, to be able to alleviate some of this pressure but also recognising how important it is for siblings to be placed together the better. However those are the measures we are taking in the meantime. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Chaplin have you a supplementary question?

Councillor Chaplin: My Lord Mayor. Thank you very much for your answer Councillor Russell. I wonder if the Assistant Mayor would agree to look again specifically at the issues around the lack of primary school places or the increasing problem of lack of primary school places in the Stoneygate Ward, possibly with the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission, but definitely with the Ward Councillors, and very importantly communication with the parents because I think the parents want to be part of the solution and I wonder if you would be able to commit some time to be able to have a meeting of that nature where we can actually look at some creative and practical solutions in a Ward where there is not a lot of space where the schools are to extend the schools. I would really welcome

your views on that. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you Lord Mayor. We are of course looking at school places and looking at where the highest pressure areas are, and looking at what the potential options are for expansion of the schools, to be able to look at potential additional sites and to look at how we can do that in the areas where they are most needed. In some areas that is less practical than others as Councillor Chaplin herself knows in her own Ward there is very limited opportunity for extension or for new places. We also I think need to recognise that most of our residents don't think of themselves around Ward boundaries or around school catchment areas which are bizarre and administrative as Ward boundaries. What they do think of is how far is it to walk to that school, and I think that has to be the priority here. We have to get schools that are as close walking distance as possible, not only because it is right that children have the opportunity to go to a good local school, but also the environmental impact of being able to walk to school, the social impact of being able to do so, the health impact of being able to do so. So I am absolutely committed and recognise why we want to do that. I think at this stage me having a meeting with parents particularly in Stoneygate would be premature. I am relatively, what are we four weeks into this role, and I am still getting my head around what some of the options are and where some of the pressures are and exactly what we can and cannot do in terms of pupil place planning, but as we move forward through this I would like to engage both the Ward Councillors and broader groups and parental representatives at appropriate points through this process, both through scrutiny and through other avenues. Thank you Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Question 8, Councillor Dr. Moore

Councillor Moore: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Assuming that the City Mayor is concerned to meet the needs of all residents in the City, can he confirm he is equally concerned to meet the needs of people with visual impairment.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor yes I can give that assurance to Councillor Moore and to Members. And I say of course I am also aware that we have a very important statutory obligation to ensure that we do that. We do put a lot of effort into ensuring Leicester is a safe place, and a safe place particularly for those who have mobility or visual impairment. We did take advice and guidance on projects from our in-house specialists, we do also call on occasions on external advisers, and we rely very heavily on the advice we get from interest groups and with that in mind we have an inclusive design advisory group and disabled peoples access group who for many years have actually helped us with this process speaking on behalf of those who actually experience difficulty particularly as in this case visual impairment but other impairment as well and ensuring that we know the reality of the situation. We also have a disabled people's access officer who runs a range of disability awareness training sessions for employees and indeed for Councillors. I have done a couple of those awareness training for myself and found it very, very interesting, very enlightening and ones that have helped me and I would anticipate other Members and officers of the City Council to understand first-hand the challenges faced by people with visual impairment.

Lord Mayor: Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Dr. Moore, have you a supplementary question?

Councillor Moore: Yes I do have my Lord Mayor. Thank you very much. Actually I think this is probably one of the most important questions I am ever going to ask as a Councillor. First of all I would like to thank the City Mayor for his answer and for the various measures that he has described that we put in place to help people, not just with visual impairment but with disability. But my supplementary question is specifically about the City Mayor's vision of connecting Leicester. Now he knows I am a big fan of connecting Leicester. It's transforming the look of the City and it is stimulating the economy. But for that small minority of Leicester residents, there are about 2,222 who are registered blind or partially sighted, it just isn't working. First of all they can't see that it looks good and secondly they are reporting to me that they feel virtually excluded from the City Centre. They are scared to cross Jubilee Square because they don't want to fall off the edges, but they are particularly concerned about shared space. That is no curbs, so there is no tactile cubes between pavement and road and cars can park on the pavements, but particularly the biggest worry is courtesy crossings which are junctions in City Centres where there aren't any curbs or traffic lights and drivers are supposed to make eye contact with pedestrians to see if they actually want to cross and they will stop and let them go across. That is alright if you can see, if you can't see you can't really make eye contact with the driver if you are blind. I actually tried today in Oadby going across a courtesy crossing looking very keenly at the car that was coming towards me who took not the blindest bit of notice and missed me by inches. The courtesy crossings look elegant, they are low cost, they keep traffic flowing so I can see the attraction of them but then I can see. So here's my final question actually. Was a proper risk assessment done of Jubilee Square and if so could it be published and could the City Mayor reassure those Leicester people who have severe visual impairment that he will fully respect their experiences and ensure their safety and independence when formulating further plans for connecting Leicester, and would he be willing to meet them out on the street, a group of them, a representative group, and talk with them and listen to what they have to say and actually watch them trying to cross a road which has been adapted within the shared space fashion. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I think there are probably a number of points and questions within that response from Councillor Moore. The fact is that there is a national debate about the effectiveness of shared space type schemes and it is one that of course we engage in locally but others are engaged in elsewhere, and it is the case that there are differences of opinion about its effectiveness, although its proponents do argue that where wide-scale shared space has been introduced it has actually made it safer for all pedestrian users, cyclists and indeed for motorists in that it reduces speeds, and it does enable people to move with greater awareness and courtesy for each other. I do recognise that for those with visual impairment that is perhaps less obvious than it may be for those who are observing it and are able to actually see what is happening out there and perhaps are more confident about the impact that the shared space is having on the speed and the courtesy of the drivers. I would be very willing to meet with Councillor Moore and with others to discuss this further, although I have to say that my understanding of the way in which Jubilee Square was designed is that it was done with the full assessment of the likely impact and a number of measures were incorporated into the Square to ensure that it was one that those with visual impairment and other disabilities could cope with in a way that was safe, and I will certainly look back to see what sort of study was done at the time and what sort of modifications were made but I understand both were extensive.

Lord Mayor: Thank you City Mayor. Question 9 Councillor Grant.

Councillor Grant: Thank you Lord Mayor. What measures has the City Mayor taken if we believe his previous statement to the press and Scrutiny to ensure that his Assistant Mayors and senior officers do not hide serious problems in the Council from him therefore avoiding the embarrassment for the Council of him using the Sepp Blatter defence that he did not know what was happening, although usually to be fair to Mr. Blatter it was Sir Peter who used this excuse first.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I don't think that I have at any time suggested that either Assistant Mayors or senior officers deliberately hid problems from anybody at all, either from each other or from me. But I do actually meet on a 1:1 basis with my colleagues every week, we have weekly meetings of the Executive and I meet on a frequent basis with the Chief Operating Officer and indeed other senior officers and they do I know seek to keep me well informed of matters that are of significance to us as an organisation and more importantly to the people of the City.

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

Councillor Grant: I do. Is he therefore willing to accept, that if we have a problem in the future similar to the children's social care issue that if it comes out that there is a problem it will be unsatisfactory for him to say that his Assistant Mayors or senior officers had not informed him of it and at the very least this would be an indication of a serious failure of his own management style.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Well look my Lord Mayor I think the most significant element of the issues around children's social care was that those involved in the City management at the time weren't hiding anything but weren't aware of what they needed themselves to be monitoring and were giving thereby themselves and others a false reassurance that all was well. The lessons from it are about the need for all of us involved, whether us politicians, or in the senior management of the organisation, to actually identify the key indicators to make sure that we are monitoring them so we don't get situations like that happening again where children are potentially put at serious risk.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Question 10 Councillor Grant.

Councillor Grant: Will the new Lead Member for children's services tell us what her main priorities are for the department and the children in the City?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. The key priority has to be keeping children safe. I don't think anybody in this authority would disagree with that, but I also want us to prioritise raising the achievement and aspiration of children in our City, ensuring they can get to good or outstanding local schools, reducing and lessening the effects of family poverty, ensuring early help is available for vulnerable groups, looking at health and wellbeing of children in our City and reducing the inequalities particularly between the most and least deprived in that respect, and in terms of the department developing our workforce so that it can

work across all departments can work across the organisational boundaries that I think sometimes we ourselves put in place and are fit to be able to support the young people of our City for the future.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Grant do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Grant: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. I think we would all agree that children's safety is the number one priority. Can Councillor Russell inform us will this include the full implementation of the recommendations of the Munroe report and when would she envisage that her department will achieve that if that is the case.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. A number of the recommendations of the Munroe report have already been put into place and work is ongoing, both through the improvement board in recognition of the OFSTED report, but also in the broader social care department to look at how best we can ensure that our service is the best it can be and build upon all available evidence as to how to provide the best possible service for children in our City.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Grant, question 11.

Councillor Grant: Can the Lead Mayor for Children's Services tell Council where the idea for the Wikipedia information literary resources for schools procurement originated and how this fits with her priorities.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Grant for the question. I can tell you where it originated. It originated in a BSF ICT learning and innovation group and I could read you the three pages of explanation that I have been provided as to why they felt it should happen. I will instead read you the email I wrote in response to it which was "this seems to be a nonsense post please can you get someone to convince me otherwise." I am yet to be convinced otherwise and do not see that it fits within our priorities for children in the City. Having said that our schools have a responsibility to ensure that young people are able to critically engage with a variety of research material, one element of which is Wikipedia but it does need to be critical engagement and I would think that that was a responsibility for schools to undertake at all levels. Thank you.

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

Councillor Grant: Yes my Lord Mayor. I welcome the response from the Assistant Mayor. I think we may have to look at actually some training for the BSF ICT group on the use of Google - other search engines do exist - because only a cursory look myself I found a lot of resources actually already available and some of it freely which cover a lot of the issues which this particular initiative seemed to be covering. So can the Assistant Mayor make it clear - is this procurement plan going ahead or will she be stopping it - does she have that ability?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: I have indeed asked officers to suspend that opportunity.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Question 12, Councillor Grant.

Councillor Grant: Can the Lead Member for Children's Services brief Council further to some of the earlier questions, on the current situation with regard to school admissions.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. OK you will have to bear with me slightly here because this is a lot of facts and figures and I have got them on a number of different bits of paper so just a little bit of patience if you wouldn't mind my Lord Mayor. So this year the Admissions Team has dealt with 3,800 on time applications for admissions to secondary schools, of which 87.7% received their first preferences, 7.8% received their second and 1.1% received their third and for those who don't want to do the maths quickly that means that 3.4% did not receive one of the places they'd want for secondary school and were offered an alternative. For applications to junior schools there were, so that is the transfer for those between year 2 and year 3 where people have gone to individual infant school, there were 820 on time applications, of which 87% received their first preference, 6.5% received their second and 1.7% received their third. So 4.8% did not receive one of the ones that they chose and were offered an alternative, and of those applying for their first time entry into primary school we had 4,500 on time applications of which the first preferences was 88% received, 6.3% received their second preference and 2.1% received their third preference, and 3.6% did not receive a preference and were offered an alternative, and every child that we received an on time application for has been offered a school place in the City. Thank you Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Grant have you a supplementary question?

Councillor Grant: Yes Lord Mayor. Following on from the comments made by Mr. Ebrahim earlier actually, for the first time since I have been a Councillor I have had a significant number of people coming to me with case work over admissions this year. I do feel there is obviously an issue, certainly in my area there has never been before. So could the Assistant Mayor tell us whether she feels satisfied that the capacity that has already been planned and put in place with the significant capital expenditure she mentioned of £27m is actually in the correct place, and also following her answer to Mr. Ebrahim, can she say where the in-year arrivals are coming from which are putting additional pressure on the system.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I have got the answers to both of those. In terms of do I think there is sufficient capacity – not yet. It is an ongoing process. We are continuing to look for additional places, we are continuing to work with schools right up until this point and we will continue to work with schools to look at where expansions are possible, both for small numbers of pupils but also for full classes and potential capital extensions. In terms of the numbers of children who are coming in-year which is an additional pressure for schools, we have had 4,500 new applications, so following the close of the date for admissions, and over half of these were from people who were moving around within the UK, around 2,400 were from people who were new to the UK.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Cole question 13.

Councillor Cole: Thank you Lord Mayor. It would appear from the mood music coming out of parliament at the moment that devolution is very high on the government's agenda. Does the City Mayor think that devolution would be good for Leicester?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I think Members will have heard me in this Chamber speak before about the extent to which Britain, amongst all of the countries in the democratic world, is uniquely centralised in its decision making and successive governments of all political persuasions have paid lip service to de-centralisation to bring power closer to local people, and I very much welcome that talk and would even more welcome the reality of it. I hope that on this occasion we have a government that actually intends to make some reality of it. I would certainly want us to continue to argue that it is for the people of Leicester and Leicestershire to have as much as possible control over their own affairs and the opportunity to influence those affairs through their elected representatives. With that in mind I have been working very closely with the County Council particularly, who in turn have been talking with the District Councils in their area about ways in which we can respond to what is being at least said in Whitehall about devolution and seek to ensure that we take the opportunities to forward a case for greater powers to be devolved to us. We are looking particularly at issues to do with transportation in Leicester and Leicestershire, road, rail transportation and of course public transport. And also at issues about being more effectively joined up in the provision of training and skills for our local economy, arguing of course that we are far better placed than those in Whitehall or remote agencies to decide to respond to what local employers are telling us, what we ourselves understand about the needs of those who might seek jobs in our economy. I will be meeting with representatives of the County Council and the District Councils next week and very much hope that at that stage we will be in a position to speak publicly about the bid that we will be making to government and that we will jointly be pressing on Government in the hope that we can get some reality in terms of devolution to Leicester and Leicestershire out of what has been said nationally.

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

Councillor Cole: Can I thank the City Mayor for his response Lord Mayor. It is my understanding is that if devolution is going to come to this part of the world then it is probably going to be midland wide arrangement, and I just wondered given the benefits that London has being a hub for the powerhouse situation in the south, what is the likelihood of Leicester being the hub for the Midlands.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: One of the points that I and indeed the County have been making very strongly is that devolution ought not to be a one size fits all approach across the whole country. What makes sense for London, what makes sense for Greater Manchester, what makes sense for the North East is going to be very different to what makes sense for a County like Leicestershire. We are not part of a large conurbation; we are a City that has an inter-dependent relationship with the County and the Districts around us. That is different from Great Manchester and it is different from London. It is also different from the West Midlands where the dominance of Birmingham is a major issue in deciding how they take forward

something that allows collaboration beyond the boundaries of that particular City. I am convinced, as are representatives of the County Council, the Leader of the County Council that we need to be pressing the government to recognise that the economic entity of which we are a part is essentially Leicester and Leicestershire and it is not something that is part of Birmingham on the one hand or indeed part of the Nottingham/Derby axis that is to our north. And it will be I think on that basis that we make our case that we need a solution that is appropriate for us in our locality for localism for our people.

Lord Mayor: Question 14, Councillor Grant.

Councillor Grant: Can the Lead Member for Children's Services inform Council what progress has been made to recruiting a principal lead Social Worker for the service.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you Lord Mayor. The Principal Social Worker post was advertised twice in 2014 and did not attract sufficiently high calibre of candidates to appoint. The job description and person specification was re-written in May this year to reflect the service needs described in the OFSTED action plan and the role will be re-advertised shortly.

Lord Mayor: Do you have a supplementary question?

Councillor Grant: Yes. Within the Munroe report the position of Principal Lead Social Worker was intended to act as a lightning rod, an advocate for Social Workers. Obviously the turnover of social workers was one of the main contributing factors to the problems that OFSTED highlighted. Can the Assistant Mayor tell us how many Social Workers and Team Leaders have left the service over the last two months?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: I funnily enough can't tell Councillor Grant that right off the top of my head. If he gives me about 20 minutes I can find it in the information I have got and will happily share it with him. But what I do think it is probably more important for both Councillor Grant and other Members in the Chamber to know about is the work we are doing around workforce development, we now have a workforce development lead in children's services that is looking at the issues of recruitment and retention but also ensuring that we get the support for our Social Workers, for our front line staff and their team managers to ensure that they can do the best possible practice for children in the City. So we are very, very conscious of this, it is something that is being constantly monitored, we are looking at both the balance of permanent versus agency Social Workers, we are looking at the length of contracts, we are looking at how we provide greater stability, and we are looking at what other people are doing recognising that we don't have all the answers, but also recognising that our staff can easily be poached, we live in an area where it is very, very easy to travel to other locations and therefore we have to be very conscious of what packages are being offered for Social Workers, and not only financially but in the broader sense around support. This is something that we are actively working on through our workforce development team and as I say I am happy to supply those figures to Councillor Grant.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Grant question 15.

Councillor Grant: Given that the Crown Prosecution Service has decided not to proceed with the criminal trial in relation to allegations against Lord Janner, are there now actions the Council should take to ask the police for any information that may relate to the Council to ensure there are no legacy issues we should be dealing with?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I think Members will be aware that it was announced in April that the Goddard Inquiry which is the independent Inquiry examining historical child sex abuse in England and Wales is to conduct a full investigation into the allegations made against Lord Janner. When we look back to the period that is covered by these allegations because I think it is important for us to remember that what we had then was a situation where there were two tiers of the Council. The City Council was then not a unitary authority as it is today but it actually a non-Metropolitan District Council, and it was the County Council at the time that had the responsibility for providing residential provisions for children who needed to be brought into care and indeed also had the child safeguarding responsibilities. As a result of that clearly they are more likely to have the records than we are. That having been said we have been putting arrangements in place for senior officers from both local authorities as they are today to work with the Leicestershire Police to help in any way we can with any enquiries and indeed learn any lessons that need to be learnt.

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

Councillor Grant: Yes. Accepting that we might not have been precisely the authority responsible at the time, but having gone through the process of unitary authority and there being transfers of staff, is it reasonable to expect that we should do some checking and that certainly that it would seem unlikely to assume that allegations end with one person, and certainly there do seem to be rumours that things did not end as such and therefore that we have a duty to the people that we are serving now to ensure that we have not taken on any member of staff from a previous authority and certainly to seek out you know as best we can everything that happened at that time that we know what exactly happened that it ended that we have not got any member of staff within this Authority who is linked to any allegations that go back being historic because of the issues that causes for the victims at the time but also for service users now?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. In normal circumstances my response would be to Members that you know when asked a question of this sort rumours ought not to be taken too seriously. Actually I think history tells us that in this sort of circumstance rumours ought to be taken very seriously indeed. But if there are issues that Councillor Grant is aware of where there may be issues that need to be followed up I am sure that the appropriate officers here and the Police will be very interested to know of them and to be sure that they check them out to make sure there aren't issues that have not yet been adequately explored. As far as I am aware all of the issues that have needed investigation following up have been followed up but one can't be complacent about these circumstances. So I will say to Councillor Grant and indeed to other Members if there are issues that they are aware of and rumours, however slight they may seem, that need to be investigated, need to be reported, I would encourage them to come forward with them to speak to

one of the senior officers of the Council or speak directly to the police.

REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

REVISIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A report of the Monitoring Officer was considered which gave details of suggested amendments to the Constitution.

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by the Councillor Westley and carried:-

8. That Council:

- 1) Agree the new Contract Procedures Rules (CPR) comprising Part 4G of the Constitution and attached as Appendix 1 with the following amendments

Insertion of a new text at 19.2 to read “The Executive will receive bi-annual monitoring reports of all Waiver activity undertaken pursuant to section 24 of these Rules and all Contract Extensions undertaken pursuant to sections 60.5 and 60.6 of these Rules.”

Insertion of a new section 19.1.6 to read “The Bi-annual monitoring reports prepared under section 19.2 below”

- 2) Agree the associated amendments to Part 3 of the Finance Procedure Rules (FPR) at Part 4F of the Constitution and attached as Appendix 2;

- 3) Agree a revision to Article 6 (Part 2, Key Decisions) as follows;

“In the case of one off or capital expenditure, spending of over £1m is to be committed on a scheme except where:

(i) The scheme has been specifically approved by Council; or

(ii) The scheme is not a city council sponsored scheme, is not to take place within the City boundary (unless sponsored wholly by another public body) and constitutes city council expenditure solely by virtue of the council receiving and disbursing external grant (including accountable body arrangements).”

- 4) Agree changes to the Terms of Reference for Employee’s Committee as set out in Appendix 3 of the report;

- 5) Agree the changes to the functions of the Licensing Sub Committees as set out in Appendix 4 of the report;

- 6) Agree a change to the Terms of Reference of the Health & Well Being Board to take account of its responsibilities in relation to the

Better Care Fund, as per paragraph 3.15 in the report;

- 7) Agree changes to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules found in Part 4I of the Constitution, as set out in Appendix 5 of the report, such as to ensure compliance with the new statutory dismissal procedures for the Head of Paid Service; Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer
- 8) To agree the changes, set out in Appendix 6 of the report, to the Good Practice Guidance for Member involvement in Planning and Development Control decisions found in Part 5 of the Constitution *with the following amendments:*
 - (i) that paragraph 6.8 shall be moved to section 8 of the Guidance and be included as a new paragraph 8.7
 - (ii) that a new paragraph 8.8 be added to say “Where an Elected Member makes representations or contact on a planning application (whether orally or in writing) which is to be decided either by Committee or by Officers, that Elected Member shall always make it known that they are a Member of the Council. If the purpose of the representation/contact is to articulate a view in a personal capacity they shall identify themselves as a Member, but go on to make it clear that they are writing in a personal (i.e. non-Council) capacity.
- 9) To note an amendment to Rule 18 of Part 4B (Access to Information Procedure Rules) which requires the publication of a wide range of “officer decisions” under new statutory provisions relating to openness and transparency.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS, REGULATORY AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Moved by Councillor Westley, seconded by the City Mayor and carried:

9. I move that the technical resolution regarding the formation of Scrutiny Committee and Commissions and Regulatory and Council Committees as printed on the Council Script in italics, be approved.

Technical Resolution – Scrutiny Committee, Commissions & Regulatory and Council Committees

- (i) That the Overview Select Committee, Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission, Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission, Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission, Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission, Housing Scrutiny Commission, and the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission all be established in accordance with the existing Terms of Reference and the size of each being in accordance with the (attached) lists circulated to all Members and notes that the remaining places will be filled in consultation with the relevant Members / procedures.

- (ii) That the Audit and Risk Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board, Standards Committee, Planning and Development Control Committee, Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committees all be established in accordance with the existing Terms of Reference and the size of each in accordance with the (attached) list circulated to all Members and notes that the remaining places will be filled in consultation with the relevant Members / procedures.
- (iii) That the Chairs of Audit and Risk Committee and Health and Wellbeing Board, and Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning and Development Control Committee, Chair and Vice Chair of the Standards Committee, Chair and Vice Chairs of the Licensing Committee and Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview Select Committee, Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission, Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission, Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission, Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission, Housing Scrutiny Commission, and the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission be in accordance with the (attached) lists circulated to all Members.

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Moved by Councillor Westley, seconded by the City Mayor and carried:-

- 10. That the cycle of meetings of the Scrutiny, Regulatory and Council Committees be confirmed as set out in the schedule of meetings attached to the Council Script.

EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

The City Mayor noted that Councillor Kirk Master had joined the Executive with responsibility for neighbourhoods.

NOTICES OF MOTION

None received.

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

Close of Meeting

The Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 6.21pm.