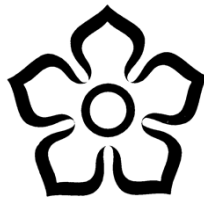


Thursday, 14 June 2018



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, 14 JUNE 2018 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 meeting held on 22 March 2018 and the Annual Council Meeting held on 17 May 2018 are available to view at:

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=8214&Ver=4>

and

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=8215&Ver=4>

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

4. **STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR / EXECUTIVE**
5. **PETITIONS**
 - Presented by Members of the Public
 - Presented by Councillors
6. **QUESTIONS**
 - From Members of the Public
 - From Councillors
7. **MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**

7.1 Corporate Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2022

7.2 Scheme of Member Allowances 2018/19 & 2019/20 – Application of Indexation

8. **REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

9. **REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

10. **EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

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

11. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

a) **Great Jobs Agenda**

Proposed by the City Mayor, seconded by the Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clair:

This Council believes that:

“Every job should be a great job. For us that means workers in our city should be paid fairly; work in a safe and healthy workplace; be treated decently and with respect; have regular hours; have the chance to be represented by unions and be consulted on what matters at work; and get the chance to learn and progress at work and get on in life.

This Council resolves to:

1. Support the TUC’s Great Jobs Agenda, which sets out the actions employers and the government must take for every job to be a great job.
2. Ensure as an employer we continue providing great jobs for our own employees.
3. Continue to value meaningful workforce engagement and representation through our recognised trade unions.
4. Continue our work with employers in the city to influence their employment practices, and to ensure that business growth is sustainable and ethical. This includes our proactive ongoing work with the textiles sector as a good example.
5. Make increasing job quality a key part of the conversation when pursuing local economic development opportunities in the city.
6. Use our commissioning and procurement processes where possible to raise employment standards amongst those suppliers and providers we work with.
7. Where appropriate, engage with government and other bodies who hold regulatory powers, to tackle issues which local authorities do not have

statutory powers to address directly.

8. Write to our city MPs informing them of our position and encouraging them to support the Great Jobs Agenda too.”

b) Windrush Generation

Proposed by Councillor Cole, seconded by the Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clair:

“Leicester City Council agrees to support The Windrush Generation in their struggle to –

1. Secure their rights to indefinite stay in Britain as citizens of the United Kingdom (UK).
2. Demand that the government restores the rights of those who have been deported or refused re-entry to the United Kingdom following a visit overseas.
3. Compensate them for losses incurred during their period of difficulties caused by the Home Office.
4. Get for the Windrush Generation, who went to live in the Caribbean, the right to return and settle in the UK if that is their desire and to be able to travel freely between the UK and the Caribbean without the need for a costly visa.
5. Restore their rights to work, receive services and benefits, to which they are entitled, and be able to move around the country freely like all other United Kingdom citizen.

We call on the Government to grant an amnesty for all those who are a part of The Windrush Generation yet don't have documentary evidence of citizenship.”

c) Community Cohesion & Hate Crime

Proposed by Councillor Rae Bhatia, seconded by Councillor Waddington:

“Hate doesn't spare or choose who it is targeted at. One thing it certainly does - it destroys lives - of those who are its victims, and also, in some ways of those who perpetrate it. The communities of all faiths and beliefs have been victims of hate or race related crimes in one way or another. Recent incidents in Leicester and across the country have seen hate acts being done in all directions. This is completely and utterly unacceptable.

Leicester City Council therefore resolves to –

1. Affirm its commitment to total social harmony.

2. Protect the rights of all our communities that make up our wonderful city of Leicester.
3. Redouble our efforts to ensure fairness for all and work to eliminate hate from our communities.
4. Encourage those who encounter hate crime to come forward and report it to the Police and/or the Council.
5. Support further opportunities for people to come together and celebrate the diversity of the City.
6. Remind all other organisations and institutions of the part they have to play in supporting community cohesion and combating hate crime.

We pledge our solidarity with the people of Leicester and will work with all who are able to support and help us in maintaining Leicester as a safe and secure place for everyone to live in and thrive in.”

12. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure

- The Council Chamber Fire Exits are the two entrances either side of the top bench or under the balcony in the far left corner of the room.
- In the event of an emergency alarm sounding make your way to Town Hall Square and assemble on the far side of the fountain.
- Anyone who is unable to evacuate using stairs should speak to any of the Town Hall staff at the beginning of the meeting who will offer advice on evacuation arrangements.
- From the public gallery, exit via the way you came in, or via the Chamber as directed by Town Hall staff.

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:

ROSS GRANT, 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

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
DANNY MYERS

Evington Ward

DEEPAK BAJAJ
RATILAL BHAGWAN GOVIND

Eyres Monsell Ward

VIRGINIA CLEAVER
ELAINE PANTLING

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

PAUL NEWCOMBE

Troon Ward

DIANE CANK
BALJIT SINGH

Westcotes Ward

ANDY CONNELLY
SARAH RUSSELL

Fosse Ward

DAWN ALFONSO
TED CASSIDY

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RASHMI JOSHI
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Knighton Ward

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

Before the meeting formally commenced the Lord Mayor asked Dr Irfan Al Alawi to say an appropriate prayer.

Eid

The Lord Mayor wished a very Happy Eid Mubarak to all in the city.

Leicester, Leicestershire & the China-Sichuan Twinning - 30th Anniversary

The Lord Mayor informed Council that it was the 30th anniversary of twinning arrangements between Leicestershire & the China-Sichuan province. The twinning arrangement, signed in 1988, was one of the longest UK-China twinning relationships and had been celebrated during the week with a new strategy creating further opportunities and building upon the strong relationships that already existed.

Democratic and Civic Support Manager

The Lord Mayor informed Council that John Thorpe, Democratic and Civic Support Manager was leaving the Council in August after 17 years of service. Although Mr Thorpe was not present at the meeting, the Lord Mayor thanked him for supporting Council meetings and advising many Lord Mayor's during his time at the Council. He wished him every success for the future.

Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Lord Mayor asked all present to note the evacuation procedures detailed on the Agenda for tonight's meeting and if anyone had any queries to speak to one of the Town Hall staff who would be able to assist.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any interests they might 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:

8. That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22nd March 2018 and the Annual Council meeting held on 17th May 2018, copies having been circulated to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and that they each be approved as a correct record.

STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR/EXECUTIVE

No statements were identified.

PETITIONS

Petitions from Members of the Public

Hannah Wakley presented a petition with 58 valid signatures in the following terms:-

"We have been dismayed by the City Council's recent tree felling. Trees provide wildlife habitat, clean our air and make Leicester a more pleasant place to live. Cutting down trees should always be a last resort.

We ask that the City Council follow the example of Ipswich and Suffolk Councils and adopt the Tree Charter's principles into their policies, to establish a more responsible attitude to the city's trees."

Petitions from Councillors

Councillor Chaplin presented a petition with 43 valid signatures in the following terms:-

"We petition for residential parking on Mere Road, Leicester."

Under Council Procedure Rule 13a the aforementioned petitions were referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.

QUESTIONS

Lord Mayor: Questions from members of the public. The next item is a question from Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox: Thank you Mr. Lord Mayor. "What was the reason for felling the trees in Prebend Gardens in the week commencing 23rd April when a community workshop to consult with local residents about the future development of the park was already planned for 16th May? Would it not have been better to consult first?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you very much for the question. The short answer to the second question within your question is yes in an ideal world it would have been preferable to have been able to consult before the workshop that was held. However, the circumstances were such that we were told by the police and by the Community Safety Team of Leicester City Council that there were urgent works required to ensure public safety. The works therefore needed to be carried out prior to

when birds would be nesting at Prebend Gardens and in such a time to ensure that no serious police incidents took place again. You will recall there was a death in January of this year and there have been 52 police incidents over the past year. So, in the interests of the protection of public safety it was decided that the work that the police and the Community Safety Team had requested be carried out, plus works to ensure that the subsidence to buildings was ameliorated. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Mr. Fox do you wish to make a supplementary question?

Mr. Fox: Yes please Mr. Lord Mayor. Local people were actually misled about this. At the Stoneygate community meeting we were told that essential maintenance needed to be carried out. We were told that police cameras would be removed below the level of the tree canopy which would assume that there is any tree canopy left after this essential maintenance. It would appear that the Council misinformed local residents rather than consult and taking every opportunity to consult.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke please to respond to that.

Councillor Clarke: Having read the minutes of that meeting none of what you have said was recorded in the minutes. I was going to say that how novel it is to have two Lib/Dems in the chamber today but there is still only one because Councillor Porter isn't here. In terms of you say residents were misled I do understand the concerns that have been raised by members of the community but there are members of the South Highfields Community that have shown genuine support for the work of the Council. Indeed one resident wrote to me to say that she had been insulted on social media by those who were protesting against the work. The work that was undertaken was in the interests of public safety. It was unfortunate that that work had to take place but if we were not acting in the interests of public safety I would suggest that we on these benches should not be in our position.

Mr. Fox: Can I just say just for the record I am not here as a Liberal Democrat, I am here as a resident.

Lord Mayor: Moving on to questions from Councillors and given that looking around the chamber I will just ask Members to note the constitutional rules that are at the beginning of the questions from Councillors and I will refer back to them if needed during the session. So, question number 1, Councillor Bajaj.

Councillor Bajaj: Thank you Lord Mayor. "Have there been any suggestions or any plans about screening England's world cup matches for the people of Leicester?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clair.

Councillor Clair: Thank you my Lord Mayor and to Councillor Bajaj for asking this question. As we speak in this chamber now to answer this

question, by now I hope that millions and billions of people throughout the world will have enjoyed the opening ceremony of football's world cup in Russia, and I just have been texted by my nephew the way in which he along with many others enjoying this opening match which started at 4 o'clock England time between Russia and Saudi Arabia. And the De Montfort University has set up a digital screen at the Vijay Patel building which is a very nice open space, a very quality lawn and offers a really good outdoor environment for people of Leicester to watch as he has organised vice chancellor a BBQ for his staff and people. And I understand that people will enjoy that and before that they have consulted our Festival Unit and the City Council, they offered support and guidance for the proper management of this event and also safety. There will be numerous pubs and clubs in the city centre, in the neighbourhoods of our Leicester outer estates and also boroughs and you know other councils where there will be a lot of opportunity for members of the public to go out in pubs and clubs and that screen and that will offer another opportunity which is very real in this sort of big event worldwide for them to have some economic boost for their economy. I hope that people will enjoy that big screen which we have in the city so that is why we are not having one for ourselves and my Lord Mayor lastly I wish all the best on behalf of the city for the England team. I hope they will do well.

Lord Mayor: Thank you Councillor Clair. Councillor Bajaj a supplementary?

Councillor Bajaj: Yes my Lord Mayor. "Would you consider if we get into the finals putting up a screen at short notice?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clair.

Councillor Clair: I wish but it will be very expensive but I said there is already an opportunity for the big digital screen at De Montfort University on a suitable place and environment in the Vijay Patel building.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Kitterick.

Councillor Kitterick: Thank you very much Lord Mayor. "Can the Cabinet Member for Housing update the Council on progress on installing sprinkler systems in the six local authority owned tower blocks in the city?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Kitterick for his question. Specialist installers, Richmond Fire Engineers Limited, were appointed in spring 2018 to work as part of the ongoing refurbishment project team at Maxfield House. Richmond Limited are currently developing a detailed design for the installation of a sprinkler system and are expected to commence the installation in Autumn 2018. It is hoped that by first installing sprinklers at the unoccupied Maxfield House the Council can learn how to best minimise the disruption to the tenants of the remaining residential high rise blocks. A separate procurement process has

begun for the installation of sprinklers at those blocks and the procurement process, together with the leaseholder consultation, is likely to take more than six months and works are expected to begin at the other blocks early in 2019.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Kitterick a supplementary?

Councillor Kitterick: Can I thank Councillor Connelly for his response for the progress made so far as we are on the first anniversary of the Grenfell Tower disaster. A picture is emerging of death caused by institutional indifference. Can Councillor Connelly ensure that we don't have too many more anniversaries of Grenfell pass before we make this important change to our Council tower blocks to make them as safe as they possibly can be?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: I can assure you there is certainly no indifference within this Council nor within this Group for the safety of our tenants, whether they be in our tower blocks or within our blocks of flats and I can certainly give that commitment. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Kitterick, question 3.

Councillor Kitterick: "Can the Cabinet Member for Housing update the Council with progress on installing a second lift in St. Leonard's Court tower block?"

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you again Councillor Kitterick for his question. I would love to be able to stand here and say there has been progress made. Unfortunately the present situation is, as Councillor Kitterick is aware, there is an absentee landlord who unfortunately is trying to hold us to ransom in respect of purchasing his area of internal space that is required for the lift which was included unfortunately in the leasehold sale. The absentee landlord continues to refuse all reasonable offers made to them. However, there has been some progress and so a further offer is being made to the owner of that particular apartment and he has accepted in principle that offer but has now attached conditions to this acceptance and therefore legal services continue to advise housing. We are currently exploring an alternative remedy which I think involves me and you going to see him Patrick. Whether you want to play good cop or bad cop I am not sure. But I am as frustrated at the lack of progress over this particular issue as is Councillor Kitterick and again it is one of the adverse impacts of right to buy, because this particular landlord obviously has no regard for his tenant as he is blocking the installation of the second lift that would benefit all the tenants in St. Leonard's Court and particularly obviously his tenant who rents the apartment from him.

Lord Mayor: Sounds like an opportunity to try bad cop, bad cop. Councillor Kitterick a supplementary?

Councillor Kitterick: Thank you very much Lord Mayor. Just to highlight as I am sure Councillor Connelly knows that the existing lift is subject to breakdown from time to time so although two lifts does sound like well why do you need two lifts, if you are trying to get up whilst the one lift is undergoing maintenance it causes a lot of difficulties for residents of St. Leonard's Court. Can I ask that given that we are working with the Haymarket Shopping Centre to overcome such issues at a much higher scale, can I ask Councillor Connolly that the lifts issue is resolved hopefully before and if the Council can demonstrate it can do it in the Haymarket Shopping Centre can it demonstrate that it can do it for my constituents in St. Leonard's Court?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Yes, certainly I agree with Councillor Kitterick which is one of the reasons why we agreed to fund the second lift. Unfortunately it is taking far too long. Hopefully we can get it resolved fairly quickly. If there are lessons to be learnt from the installation of the lift in the Haymarket we will obviously take those into consideration.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Kitterick question number 4.

Councillor Kitterick: Thank you very much Lord Mayor. "Can the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services inform the Council how many schools in Leicester currently have Academy status and how many schools are considering becoming Academies?"

Lord Mayor. Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Kitterick for the question. Of the 109 schools we currently have in the city, 29 are academies, 11 have been approved by the DFE to become academies and five schools have made applications but have not yet heard the results.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Kitterick a supplementary?

Councillor Kitterick: Would the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services share my concerns that there is currently an organisation called the Attenborough Learning Trust which is going round trying to Hoover up the control of schools in the city, that this removes accountability for these schools from the city and actually drags resources for the city, for the schools, for its education out of the city. Does Councillor Russell share those concerns and how are those concerns being addressed?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. In terms of the range of trusts that we have operating in the city some operate only in Leicester, some operate in parts of the county and they have come into the city, some

operate much, much further afield and have picked off individual schools, and some of our schools made what they felt was a moral decision following the dreadful Education and Adoption Bill being published which forced some schools to become academies and removed all possible ways that local authorities had of frustrating that process, that they needed to become academies to be able to support other local schools so we did not have a situation of schools being cherry picked off by different regional academies, national academy chains and losing the family of schools that we have in the city. In terms of how different trusts operate, the way of Attenborough I believe is one that is looking to operate just in the city and is looking to operate on a relatively small area. I am happy to discuss it further. In terms of what we can and cannot do, we can ensure that wherever possible we encourage our academy chains to work with us, that they continue to work with other local schools in the area, we have been I am pleased to say successful so far in working with all academies in the city to ensure that they sign up to the same terms and conditions for their staff as our maintained schools are, trying to make sure that we don't reduce the terms and conditions of staff across the city and that we have the same terms and conditions whichever school you come in. So that means that when we are doing things like recruiting teachers we can recruit for Leicester still and we can still work for Leicester children which is the purpose of what we are here to do. I very much regret that any school in the city is an academy and feels that they need to go down that route. I very much regret that the resources that local authorities have had to be able to support schools and be able to support their development have been shredded by this government. Despite local authorities having been proven to be the best possible organisation to improve schools and national evidence to support that, so whilst this individual chain I think I am happy to discuss further but there is generally very, very little as local authorities that we are able to do to prevent further conversions.

Lord Mayor: Question 5 is from Councillor Cutkelvin but she has informed me that she has been called out but will be returning so I have used my discretion to defer the question until later in the agenda as long as she returns during questions. So we will move on to question 6, Councillor Waddington.

Councillor Waddington: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "The revenue budget monitoring outturn 2017/18 report (paragraph 10.2 of appendix B) states that the homelessness service employs 100 staff. Why therefore am I finding it so difficult to get the homeless people in my ward the help and accommodation that they need?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor, thank you Councillor Waddington for your question. The 100 staff that we employ in the homelessness service cover a number of areas including dealing with applications to the housing register and the number of staff we employ does not directly pro-rata impact in respect of the help and assistance we give

those who come to use for assistance who are facing homelessness or who are homeless. One of the difficulties is that clearly in many instances those who find themselves homeless have complex issues and there is not always an easy solution to the problems they have, but we continue to strive as a service to reduce the number of homeless people in our city, we continue to improve our rates of prevention, and I am certainly more than happy to look at the cases that Councillor Waddington has raised.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Waddington a supplementary?

Councillor Waddington: Can I thank Councillor Connelly for his reply and I am grateful to him for his suggestion of looking at those cases. I would like to request or ask a question whether he would also look at the policy which seems to prevent homeless people receiving the help and support they need in as much as many of them are passed like from pillar to post from one Council to another and back again before, often months before anyone takes any notice and registers them as homeless. So I feel that there does need to be a look at the policy so that all local authorities work together and don't attempt to pass the responsibility off for homeless people on to another Council. Could I therefore ask Councillor Connelly to look particularly at that aspect of the policy and how the staff that are employed in the service can be used to support those who need, not just housing, but obviously help in relation to physical and mental health, perhaps drug addiction issues and other traumas?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: As with every other local authority we do have a local connection policy but I am more than happy, well what I would suggest is the Housing Scrutiny Commission, and I don't think Councillor Westley is here this evening, but I would certainly invite Councillor Westley as Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission to review that policy. Obviously, we would then look at any recommendations that come out of that review.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Waddington, question number 7.

Councillor Waddington: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "I am informed that 17 families are waiting for the Council to help find them fully wheelchair accessible four-bedroom accommodation, several of them waiting for many years. What steps is the Council taking to increase the number of houses suitable for these families since it appears that only four such properties have been made available in the last four years?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Waddington for the question. We do have a difficulty with four bedroomed properties in respect of that we only have, including Homecome properties, we have 535 within our stock within the local authority and we continue to lose a number of those properties to right to buy and clearly there is a great

demand for four bedroomed properties both in respect of the abled and also for those who need wheelchair accessible properties. We are I am pleased to say, following the ceasing of the 1% reduction in rent, both ourselves and housing associations will be commencing a programme of council housing building and certainly within that programme we can certainly look at providing four bedroomed wheelchair accessible properties. I will also say that in respect of the private sector we are also in respect of major private sector housing development in the city, we are insisting that they provide affordable housing and we have also insisted that some of that affordable housing should be wheelchair accessible.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Waddington a supplementary?

Councillor Waddington: Can I thank Councillor Connelly for his reply. I am pleased to hear that some of the new housing which is planned, council housing and affordable housing from private developers, will be designed to be wheelchair accessible. However, can I ask him in the short term because houses take a long time to build, in the short term how families can be helped for example the one in my constituency where a teenage boy is having to be carried upstairs by his grandmother and has been for several years because there is no opportunity for that family to move? They have been waiting for four years.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Councillor Waddington for the supplementary. I think one of the difficulties we clearly have is that our four bedroomed properties have to become vacant before we can adapt them to make them wheelchair accessible. I can certainly look to see if there is any way we can improve the present situation. The reality is that in many instances particularly with four bedroomed properties is that they don't become vacant very often because quite often there is a succession tenancy, so when the original tenant passes away invariably there is a succession in place which they are legally entitled to either their partner whether it be wife or husband or one of their children. But I can certainly speak to officers and see if there is any way in respect of our present stock that we can speed up making them wheelchair accessible, but clearly it is a case where we have to wait for the property to become vacant. We can't force tenants out I am afraid.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait. I note that the Assistant City Mayor down to reply is not here.

Councillor Russell: I will do it.

Lord Mayor: I was going to let you defer it unless you want Councillor Russell to do it. OK. Your question then please Councillor Riyait.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "What City Council support can a woman who is subject to domestic violence / abuse expect, especially if she is a joint council tenant with her partner and where she has to leave

the home with her kids and seek safety in a woman's refuge outside of the city?" Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you to Councillor Riyait for raising this important issue. Apologies, I was not planning on answering this so I am reading it off my phone so I do apologise if I am looking down quite a lot. There are a number of things we do when we are made aware that somebody is the subject of domestic abuse. We as a City Council we commission a range of services through United Against Violence and Abuse. They range from helpline, counselling services, perpetrator services in terms of people who wish to change behaviours. We also have family counselling available and a range of programmes to support people in going on to re-establish themselves as their lives improve following leaving an abusive relationship. Specifically, in terms of somebody's home and an abusive relationship, when they have reported it to the Police they can be referred to the sanctuary scheme which can if the person chooses to stay in their own home can insist that the perpetrator leaves that property and secure the property for them. A number of people have found that that is a way of continuing to live where they want to and feel able to do that. For other people they have not felt safe doing that and therefore we look at a range of other options to support them including the opportunity to access refuge accommodation and to be able to look at how their tenancies will be changed in the future. Somebody who has had to move out of a joint tenancy because of domestic violence will get full support from the housing team in terms of being able to look at how that tenancy can be terminated in a way that allows them to apply for a new tenancy not in a way that means that they have been seen to make themselves homeless. So, all different parts of the Council try and work together to ensure that the service for victims of domestic abuse is as joined up as we can be, and I am really proud that as an authority we have continued to fund the support given to victims of domestic abuse and their families as many local authorities as budget cuts have hit have significantly reduced and in some cases completely ceased those services. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait a supplementary?

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I think as Councillor Russell knows this relates to a constituent of mine so for obvious reasons I don't want to go into the details of that. From dealing with that particular case it seems that there are a number of concerns basically. One of which is that there does not seem to have been a presumption of accepting the domestic violence and abuse and calling it a relationship breakdown. So that is a little bit concerning and I hope it is a one-off case. So the question really is, I understand we have got a fantastic service and she has outlined the wide range of support that we give, is to ensure that it is working effectively on the ground so sometimes these things don't quite join up and we want to do the right thing but they are not quite working so that is my plea really?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you Lord Mayor. I think it is always really helpful for any of our services to hear about where we have not quite got it right because you are right there are always things that can go wrong particularly when you are joining quite a lot of complex services, and we have some amazing, amazing staff that work for our authority but there are often a million and one things that they need to know about and sometimes people forget one of the things, but where we can find out where things have not worked as well as they could and I would put this out as a plea really to all Councillors, where you have got examples we can use them to make sure that we improve services, we can take them back in we can look at how things have gone wrong and we can look at what we need to do to make sure that that does not happen in future particularly when we are providing services to people at their absolutely most vulnerable. Thank you for the question.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait question number 9.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "The Space Park proposals by the University of Leicester are an exciting opportunity to propel Leicester on to the national and international space industry/ research stage. What are the current plans for Dock 2 to be able to accommodate any businesses which may want to cluster around the Space Park?" Thank you.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor can I thank Councillor Riyait for this question because it is actually very timely. We are working very close by with the University to deliver infrastructure and services for the proposed space park on the former John Ellis school site and actually work is due to commence on that later this month. The University will then commence work on the first phase of the Space Park themselves which obviously will provide, as I think Members are well aware, a centre for earth observation and it will have with it related business workspace. The existing phase of Dock includes the UK Space Agency funded business incubator but what we have done is to acquire two sites on Exploration Drive from Homes England which together total 1.5 acres which will provide us with an opportunity to create up to 9,000 square metres, about four times the size of Dock additional business workspace for the space technology and data sectors. We have been able to do that with support from the LLEP, local growth funding and obviously options for delivery of that workspace are currently under consideration.

Lord Mayor: A supplementary Councillor Riyait?

Councillor Riyait: Yes, thank you my Lord Mayor. I have not always seen eye to eye with the University of Leicester but I think on this particular proposal I think I am totally behind this and you know welcome the fact they have produced a very good briefing. I understand that their consultation was attended by over 50 people as well so I welcome that. The supplementary

question I have for the City Mayor is does he see the space park specialising in the space industry or will there be other areas which will be providing space generally for technology and how does he see that vision going forward?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Yes I think we are enormously fortunate in Leicester to have the tremendous expertise of Leicester University in space, as indeed there have been many other aspects of space particularly important in this context and of course it was that expertise that led to the location in Leicester of the Space Centre that has brought so many visitors to our city to share in the wonders of space at the Space Centre. I certainly anticipate that the level of activity in that area relating to advance physics and space is going to predominate in the use. I think it is unlikely to be the exclusive use but I do anticipate that it will bring high tech investment to Leicester and of course on the back of that some high paid jobs which are very important to us.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait, question number 10.

Councillor Riyait: Thank you Lord Mayor. "I have recently twice volunteered with the Midland Langar Seva Society, a Sikh charity, providing at least 100 meals at Leicester Market every Saturday evening. What more can we do so that desperate people in our city don't have to be fed by wonderful charities like MLSS and others?" Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Riyait for the question. It is an opportunity for me to thank those faith groups and organisations that do contribute to supporting those in need of food in our city. Within this context particularly the Sikh faith and the Gurdwaras and the work that takes place at the market on regular occasions and I congratulate Councillor Riyait in getting involved in that. We are working currently on developing the feeding Britain pilot for Leicester. Becoming a pilot enables the City to be part of a network on a national platform where we can share good practice and influence national policy and hopefully attract some external funding. We have developed a feeding Britain action plan that is currently in development I should say, but we are looking at several themes to support that action plan: building food security, protecting people from hunger, low cost food for vulnerable groups and supporting people in crisis. All of these areas need to be addressed, not just by the Council but with groups such as the one that Councillor Riyait has volunteered for and we will be working directly with the voluntary sector and private sector and all that wish to be involved in developing our feeding Britain action plan. In addition, we have just recently pulled together our holiday food programme which we have been running for the last three years but now have put the next two years in place. We are working in partnership with Action Homeless very appropriately and local community groups and will be reaching out to

the faith community to support us to help provide free meals to children this summer, next summer and we hope to build sustainability beyond that to enable such groups to support our children and families throughout the holiday period where schools aren't necessarily there. I am pleased to say that we have recently secured £30,000 from the Department of Education to enable us to build strength within these programmes over the next two years and beyond. This is in addition to the £10,000 from our public health grant and further grant funding as well.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Riyait a supplementary?

Councillor Riyait: Thank you Lord Mayor. This group ...Councillor Clarke highlights some of the things that are going around the food programme area. My supplementary question to him is he is obviously dealing with the food side and sort of feeding people is only one small aspect of it. Is there a way in which we can work with these groups to actually tackle the root cause of issues and then to be able to help people either with their housing, their benefits etc? Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you very much my Lord Mayor. A very important question how do we engage groups to develop kind of multi-agency understanding and delivery in our communities. For me that is absolutely about knowing and understanding what is happening on the ground. We know that from working feedback we have food banks in all our Wards that people present themselves not only with a need for food but for a need for support from other services and we need to be able to enable voluntary groups like MLSS and others to be able to signpost to other services and to understand where that signposting should be to. I'd like to reach out now to Councillor Riyait to invite MLSS to join us in the feeding Britain pilot and in the Holiday Hunger programme so that we can better understand the people that they are working with and they are supporting so that we can indeed build in that signposting I have describe and I think the City Council is that conduit and we need to be there for these groups to enable them to have a good knowledge of the networks that are out there.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Cutkelvin is still being absent so we will defer that and we will move on to question number 12, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "In light of reports that police in London are investigating the "stay put" advice to residents in the event of a fire, will the Council and the Fire Authority be reviewing the advice given locally?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor and of course it is a very appropriate question to ask on this particular day when we are all remembering the tragic events of just 12 months ago and reflecting on the appalling impact that that

has had on the families, friends of those who were killed and injured. My Lord Mayor I have taken advice from the Chief Fire Officer with regard to this and he is certainly taking the view that at the moment the advice remains that in general it is better for people to stay put in circumstances of fire in buildings that are up to appropriate standards and have the appropriate fire retardation in them. But of course, they and we are monitoring the Grenfell Inquiry which does have this policy under investigation. The Chief Fire Officer does stress that it is the responsible person for each building who has the duty and determined the most appropriate advice to occupiers and residents as part of the risk assessment process, and it is in his opinion far too simplistic to use the single policy statement without giving due consideration to the building construction, design, use, occupancy etc. But if I can as I say give assurance to Members and to Councillor Chaplin we will of course be keeping it under review as the Grenfell Inquiry continues and will look with considerable interest and give it appropriate weight to a new recommendation that they might make.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin do you wish to make a supplementary?

Councillor Chaplin: I do thank you my Lord Mayor. I certainly when I put the question in I had not realised that today actually was the anniversary but thank you for your reply Sir Peter and I have asked before about fire safety across, not just tower blocks and high rise blocks, but across the whole of the Council's social housing estate, and I also wonder whether or not the Fire Authority and Sir Peter have taken notice of the fact that Sir Michael Mansfield, QC, I believe who is representing the victims of that Inquiry has already called for a review of fire safety, not just in tower blocks as I understand it but across the whole of social housing because I think it really is a terrifying prospect of having homes across the city, whether they are in council hands or housing association hands or indeed in private landlord hands, that people may not feel safe and I feel that we should be taking a lead as a City...

Lord mayor: Councillor Chaplin can I encourage you to ask a question.

Councillor Chaplin: Taking a lead as a city and I wonder if you may be more proactive with the Chief Fire Officer to see if that is something that the Fire Authority would like to do? Thank you.

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I know that the other Members of the City Council who represent us on the Fire Authority will have heard the concerns that have been expressed. I would simply say that of course you know in matters such as this we are very dependent on the advice given to us by the Chief Fire Officer and I do have every confidence in his professional ability to give appropriate advice and to assess risks appropriately, but I do believe that the events and the Grenfell Inquiry will undoubtedly explore them very fully but the events of 12 months ago be just a question not just matters of fire safety but particularly matters of building regulation and their

enforcement in the UK and whether the building regulation regime works in order to keep people safe. As I say I have heard the concerns being expressed and will of course keep the matter under review with the Chief Fire Officer and with the Fire Authority and as I say I am sure other members of the Fire Authority here present today will join me in making sure that does happen.

Lord Mayor: Question number 13, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "When will the issue of parking meter security be resolved or will the Council have to rethink residents' parking schemes?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I am very grateful for this question because of course the spate of attempted thefts in some cases actually successful thefts from pay and display machines has been really quite something that has been unprecedented, certainly here in Leicester. Apparently 165 machines were vandalised since the 1st January and we have prioritised repair programmes initially targeting the high use machines and the car parks. New security measures are being fitted to machines including steel plates and enhanced internal security but unfortunately it can take up to four hours to fix a single machine depending on the level of damage that has been caused. What we are doing in fact is seeking to accelerate the introduction of card payment facilities including contactless payment in machines, but we do expect to have most machines back in operation by July. We have been working very closely with the police to secure arrests and there has been a conviction for one offender and I think it is hoped that others will follow. I can though assure Councillor Chaplin and Members that there are no plans to rethink resident parking schemes but as with parking more generally we will seek to be looking at alternative ways of enabling payment. Certainly, paying by cards is one I have mentioned but there are also options for paying by phone and ways in which we can make it easier for residents and visitors to pay without using cash will be explored and implemented at the earliest possible opportunity.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin a supplementary?

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. Indeed I have heard reports that some of the ones that have been armour plated or made more secure have actually been broken into, but my question my Lord Mayor to the City Mayor is what has the impact of the reduced funding been from parking machines. What is the impact on road improvement schemes in residential areas given the significant reduction in revenue?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor the financial impact has been some £23,000 stolen, some £50,000 of repairs and some £100,000 of lost income. That is,

what, £173,000 in total which is of course a large sum and totally unacceptable. But I think as Councillor Chaplin will be aware that in the context of the amount that we spend on local road improvements and road safety schemes is a small proportion of the total but nonetheless a very significant sum of money and we must seek to first of all seek to armour the existing machines to prevent them being damaged as far as we are able to but also move as quickly as we can to non-cash methods of payment, both for the convenience of customers but also of course to protect our revenue.

Lord Mayor: Question number 14, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. “How much has the Council spent in the last financial year repairing pavements in (a) the city centre and (b) in residential streets and what are the spending plans for the current year?”

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor the total reactive repairs spent on pavements, that is road and footway repairs last year is £1.55 million pounds from the highways revenue maintenance allocation. Of that £300,000 was spent on pavement repairs in the city centre and a sum of £1.25 million, over four times as much, was spent on repairs in residential streets around the city. The figure for the current financial year is £1.66 million, a small increase on the expenditure of last year.

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

Councillor Chaplin: I do my Lord Mayor. I was asked to specifically ask this by one of my constituents. Does the Council recoup the costs of repairs to pavements in particular and to roads from building contractors who park heavy vehicles on their pavements in order to gain access to the site? There are a number of broken paving slabs throughout the city but in particular in the way roads in Stoneygate Ward and there does not seem to be any plans to or any way that they are going to be repaired and the residents were wondering if the contractors would be asked for the money?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor. I am advised that we do seek to recover costs where there is clear irrefutable evidence of significant damage. But officers advise me that the courts do require substantial legal proof of who actually caused the damage and of course it is very easy for a contractor to say that it was not their heavy lorry that did it, it was somebody parking on the pavement the week before and actually proving that it was the heavy lorry does actually require, I am advised, proof that is not always readily available. But I do understand the frustration in those particular roads and indeed elsewhere in the city where it is evident common sense as to who caused the damage but perhaps rather more difficult to actually prove it to the level that is necessary to ensure that somebody actually pays up.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin, question 15.

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you Lord Mayor. I shouldn't really say this to you but it is almost like calling bingo. Question number 15 "to ask the Deputy Mayor, Piara Singh Clair, if he has considered the point that I raised with him in my email of 30th April when I asked for better and earlier consultation on maintenance work to trees in light of the public's response to the devastation at Prebend Gardens?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clair.

Councillor Clair: Thank you my Lord Mayor and to Councillor Chaplin for asking this question. A consultation is considered on a case by case basis and can be undertaken in a variety of forms depending on the circumstances of an individual case as in this case Councillor Clarke has set out the reason in his reply to a question from a member of the public. Those circumstances could be that consultation may be an email or formal briefing note to Councillors, a notice on site which can be pinned on to individual trees and a letter drop at a range of local addresses, included on an agenda of local user groups and more formal consultation like we have taken in the case of St. George's church yard. But in the case of Prebend Gardens it was not deemed really appropriate to undertake a wider consultation exercise for the first phase of the tree and maintenance work which was carried out on an emergency basis on the advice on multi agencies including the police to improve the surveillance into and out of the park and to allow CCTV cameras and for the public safety of Prebend Garden users.

Lord Mayor: A supplementary Councillor Chaplin?

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you my Lord Mayor again. Deputy City Mayor thank you for your response and for referring to Councillor Clarke's reply to a member of the public earlier in the meeting. I have to say to be told that it was not deemed, I think the word you used was not appropriate, is somewhat disappointing at best. I have to say that the briefing note said maintenance work to trees and unless you are a tree expert how would anybody know what maintenance work would look like. Moreover, I understand that there was a memorial tree in that garden that had been put there some years ago to commemorate a local resident and it is unclear at this stage whether or not the tree is still there or not and I wondered if the City Council would be looking into that and reinstating the tree or doing something similar in order to have that memorial? If there had been consultation beforehand it is likely that residents would have been able to raise that issue. Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clair.

Councillor Clair: I think my Lord Mayor they have set out and explained the reason for the urgency of work for the maintenance and removal of some trees, but I am happy to now answer the second part which Councillor

Chaplin has asked. I checked with the trees and woodland officer and team who undertook this work and there was no such record of tree and memorial or plaque and at the consultation meeting on 16th May one of the previous council employees who raised that concern that the memorial tree planted in the memory of one of the ex-housing officers had been removed and she said she thought that the tree was a Rowan and was unsure of its location and even I until recent an hour ago was not aware of what this Rowan tree would have looked like and now I have a photograph which is a not a tree size, not a bush but medium sized sort of scissors type of leaves and red berries and when I went myself with officers on the multi-agency meeting with Councillor Clarke we have not sighted this tree at that time before this work was undertaken. But I can assure Councillor Chaplin that if there is any sort of record of that memorial plaque and tree I would be more than happy to take it back to officers that are doing this design work to ask if that can be incorporated into the wider plan of this garden which we are trying to make it really safe and for people to use it with confidence for years to come.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. I have to tell Council I was not expecting quite so many arboreal themed questions for once I was not asking the questions myself. Question 16, Councillor Chaplin.

Councillor Chaplin: You have got another one now my Lord Mayor. To ask “What are the health and safety “thresholds”, and that is the only way I can put it, that mean a healthy and mature tree has to be cut down?”

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Chaplin for the question. Felling is a normal part of managing a stock of trees in a city such as Leicester and assessments are made on a case by case basis and there are different thresholds for different circumstances. This could include the location of buildings, potential legal claims, the location to the public highway, depending on the tree type such as the Poplars that were felled recently on New Parks Way that had reached the end of their life and had become dangerous. You can thin tree stock to take out some unhealthier trees to enable the more healthy trees to thrive, there can be invasive root systems that can cause damage to drainage etc and then there can be development improved design of a location so improved landscaping. Sometimes trees can look very healthy and in good condition but have structural defects that could potentially cause injury to people or damage property without immediate attention. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Chaplin a supplementary?

Councillor Chaplin: Thank you. So given that we have been told this afternoon that Prebend Gardens the work was done in consultation with Police and the Community Safety Team, and I know that Police and Councillors had raised the issue several times before about the Prebend Gardens and the issues that were going in there, why did it take so long in terms of making some changes in order to support the policing that needed

to happen, but then without the consultation that needed to be with the public in order to support the park to be attractive to local residents. There is a health and safety everybody will understand that but it strikes me that because the work was left so long or at worse may be requests were ignored that there seem to be absolute ultimate, and I can only describe it as devastation. In future will there be proper consultation with residents should such requests happen again? We can't save the trees in Prebend Gardens.

Lord Mayor: I think we have two questions now.

Councillor Chaplin: but we would like to save them in other parts of the city. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Chaplin, and I do appreciate she is acting on behalf of residents who have brought concerns to her and her own concerns and I absolutely appreciate that. What I do take a little bit of issue with is the use of the word devastation. A life was lost in Prebend Gardens in January that was devastating. There have been people misusing substances and their lives are being lost by being unable to be in a healthy environment. There are people who attended the consultation who said that was the first time they felt safe to go into those gardens and appreciate those gardens. Devastation you could say taking all the trees out and concreting the gardens, that might be a devastation. There are 43 trees within Prebend Gardens, 8 had to be removed due to legal claims, subsidence and 29 trees remain on site. Those trees that were taken out were taken out to open up light to enable the health of the trees and the health and safety of the people visiting the gardens and let's just put this into context my Lord Mayor. Leicester has 150,000 individual trees in the city. In addition to that there are 107 acres of woodland. That is a 168% increase since the 1980s. There is a 1151 hectares of tree canopy, 15.59% of the city's surface. My Lord Mayor we have 18 community orchards and we have a policy to replace trees two to one. We are one of only two local authorities with arboreal association accreditation in the UK. I was going to continue but I will leave it there my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Thank you. Councillor Dr. Moore, question 17.

Councillor Moore: Thank you my Lord Mayor. This question is not about trees. "Following a training session for Universal Credit in which the enthusiasm of the staff was very impressive, does the City Mayor feel that we are operating a culture at the moment which is tailored to helping the public?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor I mean the short answer to that is yes but I think it would probably be a little bit flippant to leave it at that because I don't

think we can ever be complacent about the quality of the service that we provide or even believe that it is always consistent because it won't be. But I do believe that the organisation does better understand its need to be responsive to the communities that it serves and to the individuals who rely on its services, better tailored to that than was perhaps once the case. Certainly I think the introduction of the Customer Service Centre on Granby Street has been an enormous improvement on the rather pokey facilities that there were at New Walk Centre and I think that on the back of that the amount of attention and investment that has gone into training the staff and encouraging them to provide high quality service has been commendable. Like Councillor Moore I was enormously impressed by the presentations that were made about the way in which our staff were gearing up to help as best they can support universal credit. Whatever one may think about you know the way in which that has been introduced and the impact on the people of Leicester, at least we are going to do our best to seek to mitigate the negative impact that it will have. I think the way in which the Council staff have worked over the last couple of years to prepare for the roll out particularly with DWP colleagues and at the Job Centre Plus site has been commendable. As I say it does not leave me with any confidence that Universal Credit will not for many people in the city be a very painful and perhaps even disastrously painful experience, but at least we are doing our bit and I think we are better equipped in terms of the staff, in terms of the premises in which they operate and the equipment that they have got to operate with, we are much better equipped than was once the case.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Moore do you wish to make a supplementary?

Councillor Moore: Yes I do my Lord Mayor and I hope you will give me just a little bit of sufferance because I want to give the City Mayor some information so this might be quite a long question. I will try to speak very fast.

Lord Mayor: If it is necessary context.

Councillor Moore: I understand the DWP expects everyone eligible for Universal Credit to use a computer to provide personal information so their claim can be processed. Although the DWP staff are willing to provide support with this, those most needy of Universal Credit may well not have a computer, not be able to afford one, not be practiced or proficient in using one and they have to pay to travel to a centre to get that support and the implicit message is our time is more important than yours the client and you must fit in with us. Now my question is this. I recognise the City Council is not responsible for what the DWP does and I also recognise the information that the City Mayor has given us and I would commend many of the measures that have been put in place and I think they are working very well. But here is the question, is the City Mayor aware that our own systems for interfacing with the public might just be giving the same message? I had to make a phone call for a constituent last week who does not have a computer and is reluctant to use the phone for reasons which will become obvious. This is what happened.

Lord Mayor: We need to get to the question.

Councillor Moore: Well I have asked the question but I want to give the information to the City Mayor because it might colour his answer. That is what I want to do.

Lord Mayor: It is not your job to provide the City Mayor with the answer Dr Moore.

Councillor Moore: I will speak very fast City Mayor, OK. I was greeted with a general message, times when the service was available, told the call might be recorded, given information about data protection. This took 50 seconds. I was then given four choices; I pressed four for another matter. Time so far one minute, 40 seconds, I was given

Lord Mayor: Councillor Moore can we let the City Mayor give you an answer now please. Can we really let him answer you?

Councillor Moore: I am sure the City Mayor will be really interested in this precise detail. OK I will skip to the chase OK. The total call took 7 minutes and I tested it again today and at 6 minutes, 22 I was told I was 8th in the queue and 10 minutes I was 6th in the queue for one and a half minutes at this point I rang off. So for many elderly people who rely on the phone it is clear the system is not geared to their needs and I know this from the complaints I receive. I wonder if the City Mayor could investigate and see if it is possible to reprogramme the phone system to make it more friendly, efficient and inclusive? Thank you.

Lord Mayor: Eventually, City Mayor.

City Mayor: I think the answer to that is probably yes. Perhaps I ought to sit down at that point Lord Mayor, but in fact I always welcome and I know my colleagues do having feedback from Members either from their own personal experience or from those of their constituents about how they have found the interface with dealing with the Council and its services. I had been keen for us to move to, in so far as it is appropriate and reasonable to do so, to shift channels to enable people should they wish to make contact with us using computers and 21st century technology. I know I could talk at some length about my own experience of not being able to do that and the frustrations of not being able to do it on-line but I do think there is a balance to be struck. So having feedback from Councillor Moore and other Members about their experience and that of their constituents is a helpful way of making sure that in moving to 21st century technology we do get the balance right and we do make sure that people are still able, should they wish, to use conventional means of interfacing with us.

Lord Mayor: I am gutted that Councillor Cutkelvin has been able to re-join us and I said I would defer the question to allow me to administer these properly I am going to take them in order so we are going to go back to question 5, and therefore can I just warn you Councillor Clarke you will be

providing the answer. Councillor Cutkelvin, question 5.

Councillor Cutkelvin: Thank you very much my Lord Mayor and thank you for deferring the questions whilst I was out of the chamber. So returning to question 5. "I understand that a comprehensive piece of work has been undertaken to look into numerous highway issues in parts of Saffron and Aylestone including on-street parking and match day parking. Do we know when to expect some outcomes from this complex piece of work?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Cutkelvin for the question. I represent Aylestone. Councillor Cutkelvin represents Saffron along with Councillor Shelton and Councillor Porter with myself in Aylestone. So we all have a vested interest in ensuring that our streets are safe and sustainable in this area that the boundary runs through. So officers have been looking at a range of options and have recently completed survey work and they are currently analysing the survey work that has really emerged from the pavement parking pilots of a few years ago, but what was realised within this particular area though there are more issues over and above pavement parking and so we decided to take a more holistic approach to look at issues such as rat running, HGV movements, match day parking for both the cricket the football and the rugby. Pavement parking as I said, dangerous parking, speeding and perceptions of speeding and issues on bus routes as well. So those surveys have been undertaken and officers are in the process of completing the assessment of the final through traffic surveys, raising broad options for discussion and evaluating those options particularly for controlled pavement parking zones. The options that have been identified do include looking at residents' parking, however, that will obviously be something that will need to be discussed between ourselves and the residents too should it be something we want to bring forward. In terms of a potential quick win officers have informed me as a result of your question that we are looking at the feasibility of placing double yellow lines at all corners and dropped kerbs in the area to provide some quick wins and enable enforcement action over inconsiderate and dangerous parking. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cutkelvin a supplementary?

Councillor Cutkelvin: Yes thank you my Lord Mayor. I understand that this is a complex piece of work and as Councillor Clarke has sort of intimated, each street in the area is very nuanced in terms of actually which selection of those problems affects them. We are obviously bombarded by the fact that we have got three major sports arenas and this particular part of town I understand is actually one of the most difficult in terms of looking at parking. One of our key jobs as local Councillors is to manage expectations of our local residents and over the last few years we have had a number of residents on almost weekly if not monthly occasions approach us about various parking or highway issues. My answer to them over the last 18 months has been just hang on in there, there is this really fantastic piece of

work that is being done, we expect to see something probably in about the next 18 months. And I've tired of saying that and I have been saying it now for 18 months so I just think that we need to be moving the conversation on with local residents now, moving it on to actually what they expect to see as the next steps. I hope the Assistant Mayor will agree?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Clarke: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I absolutely do agree. I had a resident come to my last surgery to ask for an update on what had been happening and this question as well is evidence that you know some outcomes now need to be seen and discussed in public with residents. It is very important that what is a complex piece of work does start to see some light at the end of the tunnel.

Lord Mayor: Moving to the next deferred question. Councillor Cutkelvin can you ask question number 11.

Councillor Cutkelvin: Yes thank you my Lord Mayor. "Why are we still waiting for the demolition of some derelict shops next to the St. Andrew's estate?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor this is an issue on which we have been waiting for an outcome even longer than we have been waiting for one on the last question that she asked. My Lord Mayor I am advised that frustrating as it has been there have been complexities with planning and with party wall matters and these have certainly caused all the frustration, not just to the local Ward Councillors, but also to me. I am told that these matters have now at last been resolved and that officers will be contacting Ward Councillors over the next week regarding the plans to demolish the shops. I understand that they now have a programme that will enable demolition to commence in July and it will take about five weeks to be completed. The reason for the full five weeks is not just that they have to come down but they have also got to make good afterwards and they have got to you know restore a hard surface in place of the shops. I very much hope that this will be the last occasion on which you need to ask this question in this Council chamber.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cutkelvin have you got a supplementary?

Councillor Cutkelvin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. By actually grouping these two questions together you provided me with an opportunity to take an overview of the theme and the theme here is that Councillors are not being communicated with, and I am sure across the board in most wards everyone will have examples of times where things have happened. I understand that there are legitimate reasons for slippage in timelines and these are you know to be understood, but again going back to our role as a Councillor we are here to manage our residents' expectations and if we are not given the information or up to date information we cannot only represent them but we

can't manage their expectations. Just to give a couple of other examples very briefly. Marriott primary school I visited recently only to find out that the number on role had jumped by over 100 pupils. I had no idea that had happened. Going to the Aylestone Leisure Centre I had heard a whisper on the estate that they were switching the area upstairs into a gym. Again I did not know about that until that had come through the residents. And one final one I actually attended a meeting today at Aylestone recreational ground to talk about security lighting and whilst I was there I was told that they are going to demolish some of the pavilion buildings. Again a decision which I had not been told about. There is a common theme here where officers do not feel the need or necessarily think that we are part of the conversation and I would just like to ask why?

Lord Mayor: Is there a question Councillor Cutkelvin.

Councillor Cutkelvin: I would like the City Mayor to take that theme away with him? Thank you.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor that is a point very well made indeed in linking the two issues together is entirely appropriate. I obviously you know in my present role don't have quite the same sort of expectations of me but I have served as a Ward Councillor for many years and I know how intensively frustrating and annoying it can be to discover that everybody out there knows what is happening in the Ward and I don't, and that is just not acceptable it really isn't and the point as I say is very well made because it is frustrating and embarrassing when Ward Councillors find themselves faced with situations where they are apparently the last ones to know what is going on particularly when it is such high profile issues as the ones that Councillor Cutkelvin has drawn our attention to. I will again make the point to senior officers themselves about this it is not just a matter for the senior officers themselves, it should go down through the organisation that Ward Councillors are elected to represent the people of the Wards and to do that effectively they need to know what is happening in their Wards and they particularly need to know what the Council is going in their Wards. They need to be the first to know and the first to have their views listened to. Not the last to know and the last ones to have their views taken account of. I will my Lord Mayor take the opportunity to express that opinion very strongly to officers of the Council.

Lord Mayor: Back to the question in the script. Question 18, Councillor Cutkelvin.

Councillor Cutkelvin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Will the City Mayor join me in congratulating Terry Rogers who has been awarded an BEM for his voluntary work in Saffron?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Lord Mayor I most certainly will. It is always a privilege to champion the efforts of good people in our city and Terry is one such, and

we are very lucky as a city to have people in our communities that selflessly and tirelessly give up their time and effort for the benefit of others. I understand that in Terry's case a British Empire Medal has been granted in recognition of meritorious civil or military service which appears to fit well in his particular case because certainly with his contribution to the community has certainly been meritorious. Those who have spoken to me about Terry and quite a number have, have done so fondly and talk of him as the leading light in community involvement and engagement in the Saffron Lane area, and his work to tackle unemployment, social exclusion in this particular part of the city and to improve the local environment and promote local businesses does deserve to be recognised and he has been actively working as a community champion there for I think well over 25 years and I think he himself said for his sins, they were his words not mine, he has had a big part to play in the Saffron Neighbourhood Management Board and often kept it going when others have perhaps been less committed than he. I know he has not spent time away from it even in the circumstances of some personal tragedy and illness. I have even heard it said that he left his oxygen tent on occasions to keep the board going. But I know that he is someone who is committed, tenacious and not one to shy away from sharing his opinions for the good of the local community. I also know that together with Councillor Cleaver and others he was heavily involved in the creation of the food bank at the Saffron Resource Centre and has worked hard with many partners over the years including the local police and our own housing teams. So I am delighted to have this opportunity to pay tribute to somebody who deserves recognition as a true local hero.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Cutkelvin a supplementary?

Councillor Cutkelvin: Thank you my Lord Mayor. It has been a pleasure to work with Terry over the last seven years of me being a Ward Councillor but what I have seen over that time is the Saffron Community Management Board gone from a thriving hub of the community, real finger on the pulse, being able to drive through change sort of organisation into something now where they really struggle to get any drive behind it and a lot of that is to do with the government austerity agenda. What we have seen and the cuts to local authority spending has meant that groups like that, people who really made a big difference on the ground, people who help people write CVs, get jobs, get them job ready, try for interviews, tackling localised anti-social behaviour. Those sort of groups no longer have the support that they need from the local authority and that is purely down to the government austerity agenda. I just hope that the City Mayor will commit to still doing what is within our spending power to help support these groups in these difficult times?

Lord Mayor: There not being a question there I am going to move on to question 19 by Councillor Porter.

Councillor Porter: Yes, thank you. My question is "When it comes to secondary education how many children living in Aylestone, Eyres Monsell and Saffron Wards attend county schools?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you Lord Mayor. 1056.

Lord Mayor: A supplementary Councillor Porter?

Councillor Porter: Yes, thank you. Well obviously some socialists get a bit of a bee in their bonnet when city children attend county schools, but I think a sensible view is that it should be down to parental choice. So are the Council or is the Assistant Deputy Mayor for Children, is she aware of the Council putting any obstacles in the way of parents trying to get their children into county schools, and if she was what measures would she put in place to make sure that it did not happen and that they were able to go to the schools that the parents want to send their children to?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Russell.

Councillor Russell: Thank you my Lord Mayor. School choices are a matter for parents, parents are able to put forward their preferences, they are then if parents put forward a preference for a county school we send that to the county council who go through and allocate appropriately. If there are any concerns about admissions codes not being followed which I think is what Councillor Porter is hinting at then they can be picked up both at the early part of an appeal stage but can also be brought to both our attention or the attention of the admissions body for the UK, and I am happy to provide him with the details of that if he requires them after the meeting.

Lord Mayor: Question 20, Councillor Porter.

Councillor Porter: Thank you. "Since 2011 how much grant money has the Council delivered / given directly to businesses in the city?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: Thank you my Lord Mayor. I have actually been given in reply to this an awful lot of detail but I will perhaps just give the headline figures. The identified funding for major business support for economic and regeneration programmes totals in the region of £6.1m. As I say I have got a lot of detail which I will happily provide to Councillor Porter afterwards but I don't think I want to take the Council's time reading it all at this time of the evening. I will just say in brief about it that it amounts to many hundreds of jobs and has resulted in many tens of millions of pounds of private sector investment in the city obviously bringing boost to our economy and jobs to our people.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter a supplementary?

Councillor Porter: Yes thank you. Can the Council explain how they are able to correct market failures and how it is possible that businesses that

don't receive the Council's financial blessing or tax payer's money are expected to compete. Surely a level playing field is the only way to create sustainability and wealth in the City?

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor it is very common for Councils to seek to support their own local economies. We do it and I think we do it very effectively indeed and I could talk about some of the major headline opportunities bringing IBM here to Leicester, bringing Hastings Direct here to Leicester those are the very big ones. There are lots, many hundreds actually, of other smaller examples that would not have happened were it not for the Council's intervention and the Council being prepared to put some of its resources behind to make it happen. We could just sit by and let other cities take IBM, let other cities attract Hastings Direct. I am not prepared to do that. I believe that we do as a local authority have a responsibility to promote the economy of the city and thereby to promote the job opportunities for the people of this city and I make no apologies for having done so. I believe we have done it very successfully indeed.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter, question 21.

Councillor Porter: Thank you. "How many families in the city are waiting to be housed?"

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly.

Councillor Connelly: Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Porter for his question. As of the 13th June i.e. yesterday we had 30 families waiting to be housed.

Lord Mayor: Councillor Porter a supplementary question?

Councillor Porter: Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. As far as I am aware there is not a waiting list for rooms in budget hotels unless that is the Council's plan is to stick these unfortunate families who are on the waiting list into the rooms in Travellodge. My question is, do the Council agree with me that it would have been a much better use of £10m to either offer that £10m at the 2% interest rate which is currently being offered to Travellodge so families could then take out mortgages and buy homes at this discounted rate, or use the money, the £10m, to actually build some much-needed Council housing for these struggling families?

Lord Mayor: Councillor Connelly

Councillor Connelly: Yes thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you to Councillor .. well I won't say thank you for his supplementary question but what I will say is that we don't house our homeless families in Travellodge, Premier Inn or any other hotel of that nature, and in respect of the £10m, the £10m in respect of that I think will be money well spent and following events within

the authorities where we are beginning a programme of building Council properties and those Council properties have to be funded from the housing revenue account. They can't be funded from the general fund and therefore he is mixing up his general fund and his HRA which to be honest is no great surprise.

Lord Mayor: Question 22, Councillor Porter.

Councillor Porter: Yes before I put this question. I have not actually checked the Council's website so it might have been sorted already but my question is "When are the Council going to update their web site so when tax payers type in "payments or spending over £500" they actually get the data coming up straight away?"

Lord Mayor: City Mayor.

City Mayor: My Lord Mayor the information is on the website and has been on the website for a very considerable period of time and it requires very little technical expertise to find it there. It is part of a suite of information that the council publishes, in fact we are, and all Councils are, required to do that and I am aware though you know that despite the ease of finding it, if you want to find it that we can always improve the accessibility and the amount of information we put on our website and it is with that in mind that I have commissioned the development of a much more user friendly platform to enable us to share data more widely in a form that can be used, that could be manipulated, that could be interrogated and we will imminently be launching the initiative which will be described as our open data platform and subject to a bit of final testing but I do anticipate that it will be launched in July and I would be happy to ensure that Councillor Porter is given some guidance as to how to use and access it.

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

Councillor Porter: Yes I thank the City Mayor for his sarcastic reply and I would just like to correct him on certain things. My question was basically when you go, I have asked him this question before, I asked it last year, and I think he was being rather trivial with something that is quite important. The government specifically set it up so taxpayers could get access to data about Council spending and it could be scrutinised. It is about being transparent and to be rather blasé and say that he will show me how to do it. The question was specifically about being able to type in to search spending or payments over £500 which you could do before the City Mayor took control of this Council. You just type it in and it would instantly come up on search. I asked the question about a year ago so I am pleased that it is going to happen in July, that it will be able to go straight to search and you type in payments or spending over £500 and that data comes up, so I would like to thank the Mayor for doing that but can he restrain from being so sarcastic.

Lord Mayor: Can we move on to ...

City Mayor: The answer to that my Lord Mayor is with difficulty.

MATTERS RESERVED TO COUNCIL

7.1 CORPORATE EQUALITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2018-2020

A report was considered that provided an overview of the feedback from engagement with staff and elected members that resulted in the Corporate Equality and Strategy 2018-2020 as submitted.

Moved by Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Sood, seconded by City Mayor and carried:

9. a) The content of the report and appendices be noted; and
- b) That the Corporate Equality Strategy 2018 – 2022 and Action Plan, be approved.

7.2 SCHEME OF MEMBER ALLOWANCES 2018/19 & 2019/2020 – APPLICATION OF INDEXATION

A report was considered that outlined the effect of the recent agreement of the Local Government Employees pay award upon the Schemes of Members Allowances and the indexation of the allowances in line with the Independent Remuneration Panel's report.

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

10. That Council:-
 - a) Agrees the Members Allowances' Schemes for 2018/19 and 2019/20 (attached at appendices 1 and 2 to the report) implementing indexation of allowances in line with the recent Independent Remuneration Panel report and the link to the Local Government employees pay award of 2% for each of the two years;
 - b) Agrees that arrears relating to applicable allowances be payable to Members in receipt of those allowances for the period 1 April 2018 (or for the period the allowance was applicable) to 14 June 2018. This process reflects that for council employees for whom where the pay award is agreed following the start of the financial year arrears are paid back to that point; and
 - c) Notes that under the terms of the Local Authorities (Members'

Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 consideration of a further Independent Remuneration Panel will be required prior to consideration of a scheme of allowances for 2020/21.”

REPORTS OF THE CITY MAYOR OR EXECUTIVE

No reports were submitted.

REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

No reports were submitted.

EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES

No business was submitted.

NOTICES OF MOTION

11.1 GREAT JOBS AGENDA

Moved by The City Mayor, seconded by Deputy City Mayor Councillor Clair and carried:

11. “Every job should be a great job. For us that means workers in our city should be paid fairly; work in a safe and healthy workplace; be treated decently and with respect; have regular hours; have the chance to be represented by unions and be consulted on what matters at work; and get the chance to learn and progress at work and get on in life.”

This Council resolves to:

1. Support the TUC’s Great Jobs Agenda, which sets out the actions employers and the government must take for every job to be a great job.
2. Ensure as an employer we continue providing great jobs for our own employees.
3. Continue to value meaningful workforce engagement and representation through our recognised trade unions.
4. Continue our work with employers in the city to influence their employment practices, and to ensure that business growth is sustainable and ethical. This includes our proactive ongoing work with the textiles sector as a good example.
5. Make increasing job quality a key part of the conversation when pursuing local economic development opportunities in the city.
6. Use our commissioning and procurement processes where

possible to raise employment standards amongst those suppliers and providers we work with.

7. Where appropriate, engage with government and other bodies who hold regulatory powers, to tackle issues which local authorities do not have statutory powers to address directly.
8. Write to our city MPs informing them of our position and encouraging them to support the Great Jobs Agenda too.”

11.2 WINDRUSH GENERATION

Moved by Councillor Cole, seconded by Councillor Sangster and carried:

12. “Leicester City Council agrees to support The Windrush Generation in their struggle to –
 1. Secure their rights to indefinite stay in Britain as citizens of the United Kingdom (UK).
 2. Demand that the government restores the rights of those who have been deported or refused re-entry to the United Kingdom following a visit overseas.
 3. Compensate them for losses incurred during their period of difficulties caused by the Home Office.
 4. Get for the Windrush Generation, who went to live in the Caribbean, the right to return and settle in the UK if that is their desire and to be able to travel freely between the UK and the Caribbean without the need for a costly visa.
 5. Restore their rights to work, receive services and benefits, to which they are entitled, and be able to move around the country freely like all other United Kingdom citizen.

We call on the Government to grant an amnesty for all those who are a part of The Windrush Generation yet don't have documentary evidence of citizenship.”

11.3 COMMUNITY COHESION & HATE CRIME

Under Council Procedure Rule 18c Councillor Riyait and the Councillor Waddington as proposers and seconders of the motion sought the consent of Council to amend the motion previously detailed on the agenda for the meeting to the following text:-

“Hate doesn't spare or choose who it damages. One thing it certainly does - it destroys lives - of those who are its victims, and also, in some ways of those who perpetrate it. The communities of all faiths and beliefs have been victims of hate or race related crimes in one way or another.

The recent incident in Leicester where Paul Moore was convicted of the attempted murder of a Muslim woman, Zaynab Hussein for simply wearing the Hijab highlighted the unacceptable rise of Islamophobia, has compelled us to bring this motion to show our revulsion of such acts of hate and show that the racists will never divide us.

Leicester City Council therefore resolves to –

1. Affirm its commitment to total social harmony.
2. Protect the rights of all our communities that make up our wonderful city of Leicester.
3. Redouble our efforts to ensure fairness for all and work to eliminate hate from our communities.
4. Encourage those who encounter hate crime to come forward and report it to the Police and/or the Council.
5. Support further opportunities for people to come together and celebrate the diversity of the City.
6. Remind all other organisations and institutions of the part they have to play in supporting community cohesion and combating hate crime.
7. With partners prepare and consult upon an action plan to combat hate crime and promote community cohesion, which will include challenging Islamophobia and prejudice in all its forms and promoting positive images of groups vulnerable to stigmatisation by mainstream media.

We pledge our solidarity with the people of Leicester and will work with all who are able to support and help us in maintaining Leicester as a safe and secure place for everyone to live in and thrive in.”

The Lord Mayor put the amended motion to the vote and declared it carried.

There followed a debate.

The Lord Mayor put the amended motion (ie incorporating the amendment as accepted by Council) to the vote and declared it carried.

13. “Hate doesn't spare or choose who it damages. One thing it certainly does - it destroys lives - of those who are its victims, and also, in some ways of those who perpetrate it. The communities of all faiths

and beliefs have been victims of hate or race related crimes in one way or another.

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We pledge our solidarity with the people of Leicester and will work with all who are able to support and help us in maintaining Leicester as a safe and secure place for everyone to live in and thrive in.”

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no further or urgent items of business the Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.56pm.