



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND TOURISM SCRUTINY  
COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2018 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Khote (Chair)  
Councillor Rae Bhatia (Vice Chair)

Councillor Bhavsar  
Councillor Kitterick

Councillor Patel  
Councillor Porter

Councillor Sandhu

In attendance:

Councillor Clarke – Deputy City Mayor  
(Environment, public health and health integration)

\* \* \* \* \*

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Chowdhury and from the City Mayor.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**17. MINUTES**

In respect of Minute 12 'Social Value Charter – Update', The Chair requested an update on the progress concerning circulation of the draft Social Value Charter and Social Value Guide. In response, it was confirmed that the documents would be circulated to members prior to the launch of the Charter, which was expected in November 2018.

In respect of Minute 11 'Putney Road Scheme – Consultation Update', Councillor Porter indicated that the Minutes referred to cycle lanes in 'Knighton Lane West' and asked that this be clarified to refer to Knighton Lane East. He also commented on the significance of the City Mayor's comments, where proposals had been described as an 'Aylestone Village Bypass'.

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 12 July 2018 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the above clarification being noted.

## **18. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

The Monitoring Officer reported that no Questions, Representations or Statements of case had been received.

## **19. PETITIONS**

The Monitoring Officer reported that no Petitions had been received.

## **20. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2011-2021**

The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation submitted a report, which provided an update on the Leicester Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2021 and provided an update on progress made on the Biodiversity Action Plan Programme for 2018/19.

It was reported that the Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2021, which was appended to the report, set out how the Council would manage, promote and extend the city's natural habitats, helping people to enjoy and understand the biodiversity of the city. It was reported that the Plan would set out the priorities for future action.

The Action Plan and programme aimed to:

- Encourage Participation and Raise Awareness of Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
- Identify and advise on opportunities to incorporate biodiversity and improve ecological networks
- Maintain a database to record species data and status of designated sites
- Create, conserve or enhance Priority Habitats to increase biodiversity value
- Conserve Priority Species in Leicester by ensuring compliance with wildlife legislation and guidance and working with landowners and developers

A presentation was given, which detailed recent projects delivered through the Biodiversity Action Plan.

In considering the Action Plan, members made the following specific comments:

- The requirement to retain mature trees in city centres was considered to be of great importance and that policies to protect trees and the promotion of 'green walls' should be encouraged. The inclusion of suitable policies within the draft Local Plan were highlighted to give assurances that the issues concerning the retention of mature trees were being appropriately considered.

In respect of the national planning policy framework concerning the replacement of trees as a compensation for development, it was clarified that the retention of trees and biodiversity was a significant factor. The position of the Council was to avoid any loss of trees before the introduction of mitigation was explained.

- It was confirmed that partnership work was essential to ensure that the ambitions of the Plan could be achieved. The importance of the Council being not seen as the single voice in promoting biodiversity was expressed, and the work of organisations such as the Wildlife Trust and Bug Life were noted and welcomed.
- The need to ensure greater education concerning the biodiversity Action Plan was expressed. Members particularly referred to the numbers of comments and complaints at surgeries in respect of grass cutting and highway maintenance of roadside verges. It was suggested that greater awareness would lead to a better understanding and a reduction in public complaints.

In response to questions, it was clarified that funding for the implementation of the Plan was received from the Environment Agency where schemes related to flood alleviation, and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). In reply to a question it was reported that the city performed favourably with other neighbouring and comparable cities. It was clarified that biodiversity practices were often shared to promote good practice.

A Commission member raised concerns in respect of the disposal of waste on agricultural land. In response it was reported that as there was a limit to the amount of agricultural land in the city, however it was confirmed that further information could be researched on the issue, which would be forwarded to the member separately.

It was AGREED to note and welcome the content of the report.

## **21. BUS SERVICES ACT 2017**

The Chair presented the Task Group report: “Review of The Bus Services Act 2017 – the impacts and opportunities”. She thanked all those members of the Task Group and the bus users and bus companies for providing evidence to the review throughout the process.

The Vice Chair gave a presentation to outline the key factors of the review and the associated recommendations.

In response to questions from a Commission member, the evidence of the reported data concerning increased bus usage was clarified. It was noted that bus companies had recently invested heavily in services and fleet improvements and it was reported that that this increased confidence could be correlated to infrastructure improvements and highway works undertaken. In respect of further data concerning punctuality and bus user satisfaction, the Chair suggested that details be forwarded to the Commission member separately.

The Deputy City Mayor (Environment, public health and health integration) commented on the enhanced involvement and liaison with bus company representatives, which had resulted from the implementation to the review. The positive impact was noted and welcomed.

In discussing the content of the review, the Commission noted and supported the Executive Summary and Conclusions of the report and supported the recommendations therein.

It was AGREED:

To ask that the City Mayor and Executive approve the report findings and recommendations, namely:

- 1) The Bus Services Act provides an opportunity for Leicester City Council to improve its bus services by working more closely with local bus companies, with the following approaches recommended:
  - To consider the creation of a formal partnership arrangement to support coordinated investment and give the council greater influence on the delivery of bus services. The task group considered that the Enhanced Partnership model may offer some advantages over other approaches.
  - To consider introducing more incentives and discounts as part of the multi-ticketing and multi-modal ticketing systems in Leicester and across boundaries.
  - To work with bus operators to share data to inform service improvements.

- The council to encourage bus operators to promote smarter & integrated cashless methods of payments on all bus travel journeys to promote bus use, whilst taking into account social needs.
- In light of recent survey findings by *Transport Focus* in February 2018 'Using the bus: what young people think' - The council and bus operators to consider options to encourage increase in bus use by young people and students in Leicester.
- The council to support the importance of social value considerations through delivering public transport network in the city.
- To consider the guidance briefing paper, case studies and best practice:  
<https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/bus-services-act-guidance.pdf>

2) That the Commission receive a progress report in the next 12 months.

## **22. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Commission's Work Programme was submitted for information and comment.

It was suggested by a Commission member that the decision item as listed in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions; "New Opportunities Funding" should be submitted to the Commission in due course.

It was AGREED that the Work Programme be noted and amended to include the above item.

## **23. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 6.55pm.