Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2019 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Waddington (Chair)
Councillor Sandhu (Vice-Chair)

In Attendance:

Councillor Clarke – Deputy City Mayor (Environment and Transportation)
Councillor Myers – Assistant City Mayor (Policy Delivery and Communications)
Sir Peter Soulsby – City Mayor

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38. INQUORATE MEETING

As this meeting was inquorate, the Chair and Vice-Chair were briefed on the items noted below that had been included in the agenda.

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Broadwell, Fonseca, Joel, Rae Bhatia and Valand.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

41. MINUTES

As the meeting was inquorate, consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Commission.

42. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

43. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

a) Questions on behalf of Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire's Transport Action Group

Bhavik Chandrahas asked the following questions:

"**Question on workplace parking levy related matters.**

As you know the Workplace Parking Levy needs to be clearly linked to an improvement in Leicester's public transport. It is also being criticised as potentially impacting most heavily on the least well paid in Leicester. Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire would like to see the money raised by the WPL ring fenced and used to offer concessionary bus travel for people on low incomes. This would make it clear that the council is strongly on the side of its low income citizens who currently can't afford to use the buses at the same time as genuinely supporting bus use in Leicester which is desperately needed to tackle the climate emergency. In this context, can we please ask the following questions:

- How much does Leicester City Council currently spend on subsidising buses? How many bus services does it subsidise? What is the average cost of subsidising one bus service?

- What analysis has the council been doing in terms of who the workplace parking levy will impact on and how much money it could raise? Specifically:

    a. Roughly how many car parking spaces would the Workplace Parking Levy charge for if it operated only within the inner ring road and if it operated up to the outer ring road?

    b. Do you have a list of employers who would qualify to pay the Workplace Parking Levy?

    c. Have you asked where their low waged workers (including contractors and subcontractors) live and travel from thus enabling you to know where bus services need extra support or services?"

The City Mayor thanked Mr Chandrahas for his questions and stated that he looked forward to talking with the groups Mr Chandrahas was representing as the Council's climate emergency conversation and thinking on the Workplace Levy progressed. The City Mayor explained that proposals of how these issues would be approached were being developed, but the current situation was as follows:

- In 2018/19 city Council expenditure across subsidised bus services was £443,359 (plus £100,000 supported by a central government grant) and expenditure on subsiding Park and Ride was £270,973, which was shared 50/50 with Leicestershire County Council. In the same period the Council also spent approximately £9 million on concessionary fares, which although not directed at specific services made a significant contribution to local bus services;

- The Council supported seven service bus routes and three park and ride routes, these being services 16, 22a, 40, 81, 83, 103 Park and Ride, 203 Park and Ride, 303 Park and Ride, 154, 162. These services covered various areas across the city and were operated commercially, with additional funding support from the City Council;

- Different levels of subsidy were provided for different types of subsidised services, so it would be misleading to provide an average across all services. However, applying a very rough average gave a City Council subsidy of £58,000 per service. Any further questions on this were welcome;

- The Council was at a very early stage in developing a workplace parking levy and had carried out some initial inquiries through social media. It was expected that further consultation would be conducted with business and other organisations through 2020;

- Preparatory material that would inform the scheme and the emerging business case proposals would be gathered and would be subject to a formal consultation exercise, which currently was programmed for 2021;

- Consideration also would be given to how the proceeds from a workplace parking levy could be best used. Some was likely to be ring-fenced for public transport, and subsidising services in the future also would form part of this. Another possibility would be to use the money to ensure better coverage of the city by public transport;

- With regard to point ‘c’ above, it was recognised that low waged groups wanted to be able to access public transport. The Council would be considering such issues, but this was still at an early stage; and

- Some information was available on where employers and employees lived and travelled from, but this was limited.

Councillor Clarke, Deputy City Mayor with responsibility for Environment and Transportation, also noted that consideration would be given to the type of fuel that transport would be using. Where possible, the Council would be promoting carbon-free options.

Further to question ‘c’ above, Councillor Clarke explained that it was known where employment areas were in the city and where it was expected that employment would grow in coming years.

At the invitation of the Chair, Zina Zelter, (End of the Road Campaign), asked whether the Council would be actively asking employers to identify where employees lived, so that appropriate services could be developed.

In reply, the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation explained that part of the business case preparation would include engaging as much as possible with employers. It was recognised that there was a large range of types of employer and they had different travel patterns. The level of detail suggested by the question was not available at present, but the Council wanted to hear ideas on how a workplace parking levy scheme could be designed that responded to the issues highlighted.

Councillor Clarke noted that Climate Action Leicester had already made submissions, so there would be an ongoing dialogue with this group and further correspondence was welcome.

The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation confirmed that further engagement with a range of interested groups would be needed in early 2020. Engagement also would be held in 2020 on a new Local Transport Plan, which would consider potential funding from the workplace parking levy. Formal consultation on proposals for the workplace levy was likely to be undertaken in 2021, ready for the introduction of the levy in 2023 or 2024.

In view of the above comments, it was suggested that a discussion on the emerging Local Transport Plan could be held at a meeting of this Commission in spring or early summer 2020, to which Mr Chandrahas could be invited.

b) <u>Question on behalf of the End of the Road Campaign</u>

Zina Zelter asked the following question:

> "**The Evesham Rd link's inclusion in the emerging options of the local plan.**
>
> Thankyou for so clearly supporting the idea of the Evesham link road being taken out of the Local Plan at your last meeting. There was some confusion over whether it is in the Local Plan, so we are seeking clarification.
>
> The potential for the road is in the Emerging Options document which is one of the supporting documents for the Local Plan. We were asking (in confusing language as it turns out) that you recommend to the City Executive that the potential for the Evesham link road (represented we think by a red line and paragraph 8.19) be taken out of the Emerging Options document so that the road becomes less likely to happen in the future. We got the impression that you would have done this if our wording had been clearer.
>
> Please would you either strongly recommend to the City Executive that the Evesham link road be removed from the Emerging Options document, or

confirm that in fact you did already agree to this at the meeting on the 16th Oct and it has happened. Thankyou."

The City Mayor explained that the previous Emerging Issues document had no formal status moving forward and the Local Plan had not been produced as a final document yet. For anything to be included in the Plan, it had to have a realistic chance of being delivered in the Plan period, (in this case by 2036). There currently was no funding or proposals for an Evesham Road link, so it could not be in the Plan.

In view of the concerns raised, it was suggested that the Director of Planning, Development and Transportation could be asked to write to the questioner and clarify the situation.

44. CITY CENTRE ACCESSIBILITY UPDATE

The Director of Planning, Transport and Development provided a briefing outlining the ongoing work in response to the accessibility issues raised at the Commission's meeting held on 22 August 2019, (minute 21, "City Centre Accessibility", referred). He reminded Members that a revised version of the accompanying report had been published before the meeting.

The City Centre Streets Programme Manager advised that bidding for funding and the designing of schemes was ongoing. For example, bids had been submitted for funding from the government's Transforming Cities Fund for various sustainable transport schemes across the city, but the result was not expected until early 2020

At the invitation of the Chair, Maureen Peberdy, representing Labour Disability, provided feedback on the issues raised, making the following points:

- A change of culture was needed, to move away from doing things because it was a legal requirement to doing them because they were the right things to do;

- 3 December was the International Day for People with Disabilities and should be used to show that disability did not mean disadvantage;

- The best people to advise on the issues raised were disabled people;

- The detail of any scheme was the crucial part of that scheme. Councillors and officers were thanked for recognising this;

- It was important to undertake investment in digital democracy now. A lot of free 'apps' that could be useful to anyone navigating the city, (not just those with disabilities), already were available;

- 'Safe spaces' were separate rooms, not quiet open spaces;

- It could be quite difficult to get a manual wheelchair on to a bus;

- Were there any accessible meeting rooms in the city that young disabled people could use to meet up?;

- How will the new barrier entry system to the Haymarket car park work for 'blue badge' holders?;

- The large television screens in the window of the new Sports Direct store on Gallowtree Gate could cause problems for neuro-diverse people;

- City Hall had various problems for disabled people. For example, the lighting in Attenborough Hall was very poor and the platform lift to access the ground floor meeting rooms often did not work properly. It could be useful to undertake a disability audit of the building; and

- If possible, similar work to this should be undertaken for areas of the city away from the centre.

The City Centre Streets Programme Manager was asked to provide Ms Peberdy with contact details for bus companies, to enable the companies' offer to let disabled users try manoeuvring on and off buses at the bus station to be taken up.

The Director of Planning, Transport and Development was asked to look in to how an audit of disability access and facilities at City Hall could be undertaken and to liaise with the Participation and Engagement Manager (Children's Social Care and Early Help) to see if any venues in the city centre were available that young disabled people could use to meet up.

45. SOCIAL VALUE AND PROCUREMENT UPDATE

The Head of Procurement gave a briefing on social value and procurement, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda. He made the following points:

- Good progress had been made on making Social Value a standard inclusion in large and European Union procurement processes, although a couple of omissions had been identified and new exercises were being monitored closely to ensure these were not repeated;

- More information was needed to enable a decision to be taken on what percentage weighting should be given to social value in contracts;

- The Front Walls Scheme in Evington Road had been a relatively low value contract, but had provided very relevant experience for students. Consideration was being given to how similar schemes could be offered in the future;

- Improvements had been made to the Agency Staff contract, to ensure that these staff received the Living Wage sooner than they otherwise would

have done;

- Cleaning and security contracts were due to be procured shortly. The Council was seeking to insource elements of these and achieve the Living Wage for these staff through this;

- New more environmentally friendly vehicles were being purchased for the Council's internal cleansing and library services; and

- There had been an increase in expenditure with non-local suppliers during the 2018 financial year, so it was proposed to review procurement rules to see if this trend could be reversed.

Councillor Myers, Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Policy Delivery and Communications, confirmed that Council expenditure staying in the city and creating value locally was considered to be very important. Work therefore would continue to consider weightings in contracts, to see if more social value could be incorporated in to procurement.

The Head of Procurement was asked to provide written answers to the following:

- Which contracts were "in scope"? Were they over a particular size or of a particular nature? If the scope was limited, why was this and to what was it limited? What was the timetable to extend the scope?

- The Living Wage was an important part of the Council's ability to influence contractors. Were there any other factors considered to be important and how would they be weighted?

- How had the Council's service areas responded to the requirement to include social value in tenders? Who decided what could be included as social value?

46. TOURISM ACTION PLAN UPDATE

This item was not considered, due to the meeting being inquorate.

47. LEICESTER'S CLIMATE EMERGENCY CONVERSATION

Members received a report from the Director of Estates and Building Services setting out draft proposals for the city's response to the climate emergency, as well as the associated programme of community consultation and engagement entitled "Leicester's Climate Emergency Conversation".

Councillor Clarke, Deputy City Mayor with responsibility for Environment and Transportation, reminded Members that the Council's Climate Change Emergency Conversation had started in November 2019. It was hoped that a plan would be developed from this, setting out how the city would respond to the Emergency, as there had been a lot of interest in the conversation so far.

It was recommended that primary school age children be included as consultees in the Conversation, as they could be very influential. Councillor Clarke undertook to progress this and suggested that it could be done through Eco-Schools officers.

The Corporate Environmental Consultant explained that the Council was consulting on proposals, to establish how people felt they would affect them. From this, it also would be determined what help people felt they needed and what support the Council could provide. Councillors were asked to help advise people of this consultation through their links with communities in the city.

Councillor Clarke offered to share the findings of the consultation with the Commission.

48. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND TOURISM SCRUTINY COMMISSION TASK GROUP UPDATE

A briefing was received on progress being made in relation to the Task Group looking at economic activity in deprived communities in Leicester.

A briefing also was received from the Head of Economic Regeneration on progress relating to departmental work on inclusive economic development and the development of a Leicester Employment and Skills Plan. He made the following points:

- A particular focus of this work was looking at known published data;

- It was hoped that this work could be aligned with the work being done by the Member Task Group looking at economic activity in deprived communities in Leicester, to provide a full understanding of the situation in the city;

- Data for wards was being fed in to the review, which was an important part of developing of an evidence-based framework within which to make decisions. Other information was to be gathered from a range of partners across the city, but it was recognised that it was very hard to gain and maintain a complete picture of the situation;

- Through the departmental work, a range of projects had been identified working with partners across the city on a variety of issues that impacted on employment and skills, (for example, Social Value in procurement). At present, detailed knowledge of the Council's reach in to wards on these matters had not been identified, but officers were committed to developing this;

- Work also would be undertaken with funders, such as the National Lottery and European funding, to help gain an understanding of what was happening in the city;

- This work would be used to help shape the delivery of future initiatives and identify where gaps existed; and

- This group currently was reporting directly to the City Mayor.

The Head of Adult Skills and Learning Services explained that data gathered through the departmental work was being analysed on a ward by ward basis, to try to identify where the Council was not reaching people. This would provide the basis for a plan of action.

The Chair welcomed the information and that the work would be shared with the Member Task Group looking at economic activity in deprived communities in Leicester. However, it was noted that the Member Task Group was looking at "left behind" neighbourhoods, so was taking a different approach to that being taken in the departmental work.

The next step for the Member Task Group would be to find out what the barriers were to people progressing. It therefore would like to hear from those in the neighbourhoods and those working with them, (including the voluntary sector).

The next meeting of the Member Task Group would be held on Thursday 19 December 2019.

The Head of Economic Regeneration was asked to share the departmental work with the Member Task Group through the Scrutiny Policy Officer. The work of the Member Task Group would be shared with officers involved in the departmental work by the same process.

49. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR

This item was not considered, due to the meeting being inquorate.

50. WORK PROGRAMME

This item was not considered, due to the meeting being inquorate.

51. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.01 pm