

Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMISSION

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 2020

TIME: 5:30 pm

**PLACE: Meeting Room G.01 - City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester,
LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Committee

Councillor Thalukdar (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Ali, Aqbany, Govind, Joshi and Solanki

One Labour group vacancy

One unallocated non group place

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

Anita Patel (Scrutiny Policy Officer)

Aqil Sarang (Democratic Support Officer),

Tel: 0116 454 5591, e-mail: Aqil.Sarang@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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- ✓ 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.

Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact:

Aqil Sarang, Democratic Support Officer on 0116 454 5591. Alternatively, email Aqil.Sarang@leicester.gov.uk, or call in at City Hall.

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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

FIRE / EMERGENCY EVACUATION

If the emergency alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building immediately by the nearest available fire exit and proceed to the area outside the Ramada Encore Hotel on Charles Street as directed by Democratic Services staff. Further instructions will then be given.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

[Appendix A](#)

The minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission held on 15 January 2020 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

4. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any petitions submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

5. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any questions, representations and statements of case submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DIGITAL OFFER HIGHLIGHTING PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS AND THE REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submits a presentation highlighting Neighbourhood Services digital offer at neighbourhood buildings.

Members of the Commission are recommended to receive the presentation and pass any comments to the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services for consideration.

7. NOISE CONTROL - THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL'S NOISE CONTROL TEAM

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services will submit a presentation on the work of the Council's Noise Control Team.

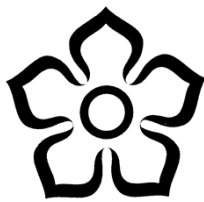
Members of the Commission are recommended to receive the presentation and pass any comments to the Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services for consideration.

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND TASK GROUP UPDATE **Appendix B**

The current work programme for the Commission is attached. The Commission is asked to consider this and make comments and/or amendments as it considers necessary.

The Scrutiny Policy Officer will provide an update on work on the task group.

9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
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Appendix A

Minutes of the Meeting of the NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 15 JANUARY 2020 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Thalukdar (Chair)

Councillor Ali
Councillor Aqbany

Councillor Govind
Councillor Solanki

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33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joshi and Councillor Khote.

The Chair wished Councillor Khote a speedy recovery.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

35. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 30 October 2019, be agreed as a correct record.

36. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

37. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that there were no questions, representations or statements of case.

38. GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 TO 2021/22

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the City Mayor's proposed budget for 2020/21 to 2021/22. Members of the Commission were asked to consider the proposed budget that would be proposed at Council in February.

It was noted that the proposed budget was set for a year and the General Fund Budget was proposed on a year on year basis. Fundamental proposed changes were to be considered by Parliament last year, but the fair funding review was side lined due to the uncertainty with Brexit. However, the Councils approach by having a managed reserves strategy has served us well and has allowed the Council to be prepared in uncertain times.

In relation to this particular Commission the Director of Finance noted that the Revenues and Benefits division were under financial pressure as the Department for Work and Pensions continued to cut the grant provided to the Council to administer housing benefit. The case load however has not significantly reduced. The service was able to integrate roles within staff to meet the demand and reduce cost. Channel shifting the service online as much as possible was also a means of meeting the service demands.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services noted that the area currently delivers 28 services such as Community Safety, Waste Management, 2 Household Waste Recycle Centres and others. The funding received through the General Revenue Fund Budget, paid for and delivered a lot in the city. The service was living within its means and had still been able to achieve an effective delivery of services. The past year had seen a food-outlets with a hygiene rating of 5 double, a 90% satisfaction levels of neighbourhood buildings and a 14.9 reduction in fly tipping cases. Although nationally fly tipping cases were on a rise, the city were able to reduce the number of local fly tipping cases as a result of a robust strategy and the great facilities the service had on offer, including the weekly waste collection service and a further recruitment for two additional City Wardens.

During discussions, members were concerned with what impact the proposed budget would have on the delivery of service and how the increase in Council Tax would benefit the service. It was suggested that channel shifting was part of the strategy to reduce cost and still maintain the level of service. The increase in Council Tax which was slightly under 4% was a means of recuperating the 50% loss in government funding. It was noted that business rates were set by a national multiplier and 50% of these rates were retained locally.

Members of the commission were assured that there were not specific areas that would see improvements rather it was a transformation process and all areas would see continuous improvements to existing services.

AGREED:

- 1). That the report be noted;

- 2). That the Director of Finance be requested to consider the comments made by Members of the Commission;
- 3). That the minute extract be shared with the Overview Select Committee and Council; and
- 4). That the Information on the Council's website regarding Council Tax increase for properties that have added extensions and planning advice to inform of possible increases to Council Tax to be shared with Councillor Ali.

39. COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a presentation updating the Commission on the Community Safety Partnership.

The Deputy City Mayor introduced the presentation and asked Members of the Commission for feedback on what they would like to see prioritised and if they had any suggested amendments to the plan being proposed.

The presentation outlined the partnership's vision, priorities and the steps being considered going forward.

Members of the Commission were pleased with the level of work delivered by the Service in tackling Street Lifestyle issues. It was noted that homelessness was a factor that contributed to this agenda and the service were praised for bringing the number of people on the streets down since the commencement of the project. Members were concerned with how they could get involved and where information to support victims was available.

Members of the Commission were concerned that the street lifestyle issue was not just an issue that was city centre based and shared their concerns about it spreading to other areas of the city. It was noted that the city centre pilot that had been launched two years ago was now a city-wide initiative, taking a person-centred approach to tackle street lifestyle. The service has been able to make a big difference and continue to do so with no additional resources, with the work receiving national interest. Officers welcomed members to feedback; both negative and positive on this work as this would help improve service.

During the discussion Members raised concerns with Goscote House and its future. Members were pleased to see the work with the former International Hotel underway but believed that this had resulted in the ASB issue being moved from one disused building to another. Officers explained that an Abandoned Building Task Group had been established to deal with and manage these concerns.

Members of the Commission were pleased to hear that the service were prioritising and working with partners (e.g. HMRC, Health & Safety Executive) to target issues around modern-day slavery. The pilot scheme which was in its early days was focussed on the garment industry. Members of the commission added that there were many other industries where this was an issue. It was

hoped that the scheme would help identify how and what forms of support could be provided through frontline staff.

Members of the commission suggested that the priorities noted in the presentation were still key areas of work and should continue to be prioritised. Additionally, Members' feedback on the plan was that an additional priority should be added around cyber fraud. Officers noted that this was definitely an area to be considered as this had become a key issue.

Officers shared their concerns with many areas of local issues that are not reported and encouraged members to use avenues such as the Ward Community Meetings and the Community Gold Meeting (27 January 2020) to report these issues to officers.

AGREED:

- 1) That Officers be commended for work being done and is reassuring and hope the work continues to support those that are vulnerable in the new plan;
- 2) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to provide the results on the pilot on modern day slavery and this item to be added to the work programme;
- 3) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to take into consideration comments made by members, particularly cyber fraud, support outside of the city centre being enhanced and information being disseminated to ward members;
- 4) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to send an invitation to the Community Gold Meeting to Members;
- 5) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to further update the Commission in a years' time on how progress is being made on priorities outlined;
- 6) And that the presentation be noted.

40. PUBLIC SAFETY TEAM 2019 UPDATE AND 2020 FORWARD PLAN

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a presentation updating the Commission on the Community Safety Team's work over the past 12 months and the proposed regulatory interventions for 2020.

The Deputy City Mayor introduced the report and presentation to the Committee and noted that the report sets out the plan for 2020 and 2021. Members were informed that the landscape of public safety is ever changing and that the service regulated a wide range of regulatory legislation governing public safety.

Overall, the service aimed to prevent and protect those living or visiting the city from activities that could endanger their safety.

During the discussions Members raised their concerns with security at upcoming concerts in the city. As the concerts would be outdoor events members were concerned with the security of these events. Officers assured members that this was a multi-agency approach and event organisers and safety advisory groups were responsible for safety during events.

Members shared their concerns with the noise level of fireworks and what the services role was in terms of the sale of fireworks. It was noted that the service's role was to prevent illegal storing and sale of fireworks and during this process the decibel level of fireworks were also checked. Although the service had no control over when people do the fireworks, communities who run events were visited on regular basis to ensure private events are compliant.

Rogue traders and street garages were also raised as an area of concern, following recent fires in residential areas in the city. Members were concerned with the knock-on effect these had with neighbours and residents. It was noted that these were enforced by the Health and Safety Executive and many other areas such as planning were also involved. If Members were aware of any such establishments, they were advised to communicate with the City Wardens Team.

Members of the Commission shared their concerns with new vape shops and beauty salons run from residential properties. It was suggested these were opening across the city and whether the service had any means of managing the these. It was noted that the service were aware of many beauty salons and payed regular visits to the ones they were aware of and worked of intelligence on new venues. In relation to vape shops, the service were aware of the continuous growth of this area within the city. It was also noted the legislation was limited and had not been able to keep up with the growth in vape shops.

AGREED:

- 1) Congratulate the Public Safety Team on the work carried out in the city;
- 2) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to Inform Councillor Govind about the level of noise in relation to the fireworks being sold, and;
- 3) With an increased demand potentially leading to an increased impact on public safety the Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services be requested to further update the Commission in a years' time.

41. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

Members were asked to forward any suggested items for consideration on the work programme to the Scrutiny Policy Officer.

42. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There being no other items of urgent business the chare declared the meeting closed at 7:43pm.

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

Meeting date	Meeting items	Actions Arising	Progress
3 July 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio Overview by lead directors (to include structure chart and Q&A session). Food safety service plan 2019/20 – presentation slides and report. Draft Work programme 2019/20 – work in progress – members to consider and suggest items. 	<p>Item 1 agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That an option of joint working with Housing Scrutiny Commission on “Universal Credit” to be added to the work programme. That the Director of Finance circulate details of multi hub locations through the Members Bulletin to all members. That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to progress and action the priorities for the service mentioned in his presentation. <p>Item 2 agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Food Safety Team be commended for the great work they carry out and; That the Food Safety team consider reaching out to young people in the city to raise awareness of food safety issues and the impact this can have. <p>Item 3 agreed: to note the work programme as work in progress.</p>	
4 September 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Library services provision - reading projects / schemes across the city to improve literacy for children (lead director John Leach) – CYPS invited for joint scrutiny of this item Universal credit impacts - one year on – report (lead officer Alison Greenhill) Work Programme <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for new review topic: ‘The Viability of a Community Lottery for Leicester’ – draft scope (Lead: Chair/Anita) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed: Head of Neighbourhood Services be requested to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide Members with programmes of events at libraries; and That the presentation be noted. Universal Credit impacts report noted. New task group review supported. 	

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

<p>30 October 2019</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (DSV) – progress on consultation 2. Waste and Recycling service provision - presentation 3. Bring banks service - report 4. Work Programme 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report agreed, and <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Lead Director be asked to send a reminder to all Councillors to encourage them to participate in the consultation at https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/; and b) The commission to receive a report at an appropriate time on the diversity of users of domestic and sexual violence and abuse services in Leicester, including the wards and/or areas of the city service users are from and, if possible, information on identified barriers to accessing the services. 2. Report agreed, and <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be asked to consider how engagement with schools in relation to waste management can be improved. 3. Report agreed, and <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be asked to circulate details of the proposed changes to bring bank sites to all Councillors once the changes have been confirmed; and b) To undertake a full survey of textile bins at bring bank sites, to ensure that they are being emptied at appropriate frequencies; and c) To consider how recycling services can be further promoted, for example through the use of advertising on local radio stations. 	
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Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

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<p>15 January 2020</p>	<p>1. Council budget – relating to neighbourhood services portfolio</p> <p>2. Community Safety Plan – Update</p> <p>3. Leicester City Council's Public Safety Service</p>	<p>Item 1 Agreed:</p> <p>1). That commission comments and the minute extract be shared with the Overview Select Committee and Council; and</p> <p>2). That the Information on the Council's website regarding Council Tax increase for properties that have added extensions and planning advice to inform of possible increases to Council Tax to be shared with members.</p> <p>Item 2 Agreed:</p> <p>The presentation be noted, and that Officers be commended for work being done and is reassuring and hope the work continues to support those that are vulnerable in the new plan;</p> <p>2) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to:</p> <p>a) provide the results on the pilot on modern day slavery and this item to be added to the work programme;</p> <p>b) take into consideration comments made by members, particularly cyber fraud, support outside of the city centre being enhanced and information being disseminated to ward members;</p> <p>c) send an invitation to the Community Gold Meeting to Members;</p> <p>d) further update the Commission in a years' time on how progress is being made on priorities outlined.</p> <p>Item 3 Agreed:</p> <p>Members congratulated the Public Safety Team on the work carried out in the city;</p> <p>2) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be requested to Inform Councillor Govind about the level of noise in relation to the fireworks being sold, and;</p> <p>3) With an increased demand potentially leading to an increased impact on public safety the Director of Neighbourhoods and Environmental Services be requested to further update the Commission in a years' time.</p>	
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Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

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<p>4 March 2020</p>	<p>1. Neighbourhood Services Digital offer highlighting: Public access computers and the replacement programme (presentation format)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wi-Fi in Libraries</i> • <i>UK Online beginners support programme</i> • <i>E-Books and E-Resources (Manifesto)</i> <p>2. Noise Control – the work of the council's Noise Control Team (presentation format)</p>		
<p>22 April 2020 Items to be confirmed</p>	<p>1. Knife Crime Strategy – report on the emerging knife crime strategy work.</p> <p>2. Draft Local Plan - tbc</p> <p>3. Report of findings from the 'Task Group Scrutiny review of The Viability and Appropriateness of a Community Lottery for Leicester'</p>		

FORWARD PLAN / SUGGESTED ITEMS		

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

Topic	Detail	Proposed Date
KEY DECISIONS & NON-KEY DECISIONS	WATCHING BRIEF – members to consider relevant items to this commission, from the councils Corporate Plan of Key & Non-Key Decisions	Ongoing / watching brief
CONSULTATIONS	WATCHING BRIEF – members to consider relevant items to this commission from planned or live consultations to provide scrutiny comments and views	Ongoing / watching brief
COUNCIL BUDGET	WATCHING BRIEF – members to consider any budget impacts relevant to this commission, as necessary.	Ongoing / watching brief
Neighbourhood services Asset Transfer Update (lead director Matt Wallace / John Leach)	Commission to receive a report	Tbc
Community Safety Plan, including: a) Tackling hate crime e.g. through schools and communities (lead directors John Leach / Paul Tinsley) b) Tackling knife crime e.g. a city-wide strategy (lead director John Leach)	To receive report on actions and progress. To consider Joint work with other scrutiny commissions? where necessary	April 2020
Food Safety Service Plan 2019/20 (lead director John Leach)	Annual update on a key area of public protection within the city	July 2019
Library services provision: a) Reading projects / schemes across the city e.g. to improve literacy for children (lead director John Leach)	To receive a report on actions / progress To invite CYPS for joint scrutiny of this item	Sept 2019
Adult Education services provision (lead director Mike Dalzell)	To receive a report on actions and progress To consider joint scrutiny for this item.	tbc

February 2020

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

Waste and recycling service provision – report update (lead director John Leach)	To receive a report on actions and progress	October 2019
Discretionary payment - hardship fund (lead director Alison Greenhill)	To receive a report on actions and progress	September 2019
Universal Credit and Welfare advice service provision (lead director Alison Greenhill)	To receive report on actions and progress To consider inviting chair of OSC for this item on universal credit (scrutiny comments to inform OSC)	September 2019
Improving Neighbourhoods – possible topics to scrutinise tbc – for example: a) Ward funding provision and community grant opportunities (Lead Directors: Alison Greenhill / John Leach / Miranda Cannon) b) Community Lottery options and viability - Lead Directors: Alison Greenhill / Miranda Cannon. c) Shop front improvement projects -tbc (Lead Director Andrew L Smith)	To receive reports on actions and progress To consider joint scrutiny for items relevant to other scrutiny commissions? A task group review has been established in October 2019 to look into the viability of a community lottery topic.	Tbc
Neighbourhoods Services Supporting Digital Inclusion (Lead Directors John Leach)	To receive report on actions and progress	March 2020
Regulatory Services (lead director John Leach) – such as: a) Private Sector Housing e.g. tackling rogue landlords and licensing scheme for private sector homes b) Food Safety and Environmental Health c) Licensing and Trading Standards d) Public Safety	To receive reports on actions and progress To consider joint scrutiny for items relevant to other scrutiny commissions?	Tbc

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission - Work Programme 2019-2020

e) Noise and Pollution control f) Building Control		
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DRAFT

