



Leicester  
City Council

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**MINUTE EXTRACT**  
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Minutes of the Meeting of the  
HERITAGE CULTURE LEISURE AND TOURISM SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 20 JANUARY 2022 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Halford (Chair)  
Councillor Ali (Vice Chair)

Councillor Dr Barton

Councillor Solanki

In Attendance:

Councillor Piara Singh Clair – Deputy City Mayor, Culture, Leisure, Sport and  
Regulatory Services

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**12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cole and Shelton.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

There were no declarations of interest.

**17. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME  
2022/23**

The Deputy Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the City Mayor's draft  
Revenue Budget for 2022/23 and Draft Capital Budget for 2022/23.

The Commission were recommended to consider and comment on the Heritage,  
Culture, Leisure and Tourism element of the budgets. The Commission's comments

would then be forwarded to the Overview Select Committee as part of its consideration of the reports before they are presented at the Council meeting on 23 February 2022.

The Head of Finance introduced the report and drew attention to the following points:

- The Budget for 2022/23 was preceded by a number of events: the prior decade of austerity (2010-2020), the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the current Social Care crisis.
- The Spending Review approach had served the Council well achieving savings of nearly £50m between 2014-2020. However, the effects of the Covid pandemic meant a significant programme of savings could not be delivered during 2021/22 and that budget was balanced using reserves.
- It was anticipated that significant additional savings would be required beyond 2021/22 to ensure future financial sustainability.
- Due to past processes to balance earlier budgets, the council's reserves remained healthier than many authorities.
- There were increasing pressures upon budgets due to increased Social Care demand, with Adult Social Care costs estimated to rise by £18m in 2022/23.
- The government's Comprehensive Spending Review provides additional funds for local government in 2022/23, and £9m was expected to be allocated to Leicester City Council, a fraction of the amount necessary to cover increased demand.

The Chair invited Members to comment on the report.

Members expressed concern about the shortfall of the budget and sought response on what steps could be taken to avoid further decline.

Members also expressed concern about the Festival Decoration budget, which was thought to be excessive, in contrast to the budget shortfalls across other areas.

In response to points raised by Members, it was noted that:

- Further shortfalls in the budget were expected in the future, which the Council were taking steps to minimize through further savings. A financial recovery was not expected in 2022-23.
- The budget due to be spent on festive decorations was money set aside and currently had no fixed purpose, future spending in this area may not require the entire amount set aside.
- The Christmas Tableau was no-longer fit for purpose and required replacement in the future, this remained subject to an amount to be determined and a final decision.
- The Festive Decorations budget may be used to cover other festivities; however, this was unclear, and a report providing further details around that would be presented to a future meeting.

- The Investment fund for Shopfronts was a long-standing, separate fund to the COVID-19 recovery fund and details of a top-up to the Investment fund were included in the report.
- Focused works were underway on green initiatives to improve sustainability in the city with the Economic Regeneration Group via Capital Funding.
- The projected £300k figure, set aside for Ugandan Asians 50 Year Anniversary Commemoration, was notional and not a determined figure. This figure had been arrived at after discussions with local businesses and community members.
- The impact of the budget on sport and leisure facilities across the city was currently unknown, however all services were being asked to consider a revision of their budgets in-line with the Managed Reserves strategy.
- Regarding the multi-use game areas budget, a review was being conducted to assess the area's most in need of refurbishment, which included schools and parks.

Members of the Commission noted the upcoming commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ugandan Community Group and praised their historic contribution and devotion to the city and its development. It was noted the group intended to hold a celebration event in Abbey Park and that a proposal for a memorial had been received.

The Chair thanked officers for their extensive work on the budget report.

#### AGREED:

1. That the contents of both reports be noted.
2. That the Overview Select Committee be asked to take account of the comments made by this Commission in its consideration of the General Fund revenue budget for 2022/23 and the Capital Programme for 2022/23.
3. That the Assistant City Mayor for Culture, Leisure and Sport be asked to keep the Commission advised of the progress with spending reviews of services or changes to service area budgets falling within the Commission's remit.
4. That the Council be recommended to explore further avenues of funding and sponsorship to assist in combating the shortfall in budget through the Managed Reserves strategy.