



Leicester
City Council

MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY
SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2023 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :
Councillor Joel(Chair)
Councillor Fonseca (Vice Chair)

Councillor Sandhu

Councillor Waddington

Councillor Whittle

Also in attendance:

Deputy City Mayor – Councillor Clarke

Assistant City Mayor – Councillor Myers

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126. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Joel as Chair led on introductions.

The Monitoring Officer noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Porter, Councillor Rae Bhatia and Councillor Valand.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

128. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transportation and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission on 7 December 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

129. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer noted that none had been received.

130. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer noted that none had been received.

131. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24

The Head of Finance presented a report and provided an overview of the Draft Revenue Budget. It was noted that:

- The main issues affecting the budget were the decade of austerity, two year stop gap to get through the Covid-19 Pandemic and the recent rise in inflation.
- The potential of a new period of austerity.
- above inflationary cost pressures in Adult Social Care as a consequence of growth of those in need although additional recycled funding for Adult Social Care after delaying promised reforms was suggested in the Autumn Statement
- Due to the rise in inflation, £10 million of budget was being set aside for energy costs.
- A significant factor was staff pay, in 2022/23 saw 6.4% added to the pay bill. This was £7.4 million above what had been budgeted.

It was further noted that the final report to go to Budget Council would have the latest figures. Using the managed reserves strategy had shielded the authority from whilst other authorities were contemplating bankruptcy.

As part of the discussions with Members, it was noted that:

- There were a number of ways to bridge the gap and managing savings to continue to help build the reserves were some of the proposals in place. Additionally, sourcing government grants and focusing on cost reduction.
- It is not anticipated that the figures will change significantly as a result of the finance settlement.
- Departmental savings that have already been declared would be made through cashless payment systems and deleting vacant posts in Planning, Development and Transportation.
- Most work in Economic Development was delivered through grant funding
- The Adult Education service was budgeted to contribute £870k to the council's overall budget.

The Director for Planning, Development and Transportation noted that the transition to cashless systems for parking would be a journey cognisant of the different needs of groups in society and migrate away from cash as people become familiar with the technology available.

Following the concerns raised by Chair with various projections of health inequalities, the Head of Finance noted that public health is expected to manage pressures within its budget, which is the default position for all departments.

Capital Programme

The Head of Finance provided an overview of the Capital Programme. It was noted that:

- The Capital Budget was a limited programme on a one-year budget.
- The Head of Finance outlined the main parts of the proposed programme which related to the EDTCE commission.

As part of the discussion Members were impressed with the delivery of projects. The Deputy City Mayor for Transport and Climate Emergency noted that co-ordinated work, helped have a real impact across the city.

It was also noted that individual capital scheme information could be provided to Members outside of the meeting on request and Members had the opportunity to suggest schemes for the local environment works list for consideration.

In further discussions, Members queried the infrastructure to support the Electric Vehicles (EV's). It was noted that:

- The report outlined the budget for the council's fleet change
- All Park and Ride buses were EV's, including the Hospital Hopper and the city centre loop bus which was to be introduced
- Zebra funding would support 96 EV busses to be introduced to the commercial bus fleet which would make 1/3 of all commercial busses electric, and make the city leaders nationally outside of London
- The introduction of new car charging points in the city centre would follow in the very near future
- Some residential areas have had had charging points installed as a pilot
- The development of the EV Strategy was in progress, this would come before the Commission for consideration.

AGREED:

- 1) That the comments raised by the Commission be considered
- 2) That the Commission note the context of the report, and
- 3) That the Commission await the decision at Budget Council in February 2023.**