



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 22 APRIL 2026 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Waddington - Chair

Councillor Clarke
Councillor Rae Bhatia
Councillor Surti

Councillor Bonham
Councillor Byrne

In Attendance:

Assistant City Mayor - Councillor Whittle
City Mayor - Sir Peter Soulsby

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214. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Osman, Cllr Cassidy, Cllr O'Neill and Cllr Porter.

Cllr Byrne substituted for Cllr O'Neill

Cllr Surti substituted for Cllr Cassidy

215. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr Kitterick, attending for the verbal addendum on NCP Car Parks, declared that some of these car parks were in his ward.

Cllr Clarke declared during the item on Car Parking that he was a board member at The Phoenix.

216. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission held on 11th March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the agreed corrections.

217. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked officers for their work throughout the municipal year.

The Chair welcomed members of the Young People's Council to the meeting.

218. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

Huzaifa Lorgat asked:

1. Coleman Road hosts our General Hospital and has an Emergency Ambulance station. Yet it is absolutely littered with potholes. Can the road be resurfaced as a matter of urgency?
2. Residents including myself have made many reports via the love clean street app for this issue amongst many potholes across Leicester, but they get closed as 'resolved', but issue remains. How does your department quality check to ensure reports that are 'closed' are actually resolved?

The City Highways Director responded:

1. *Our highways team regularly monitor the condition of this section of Coleman Road and have recently carried out resurfacing works to the section from Broad Avenue up to Devon Way, as well as some joint sealing further towards the hospital. The remainder of the carriageway does have areas of surface course that are stripping away, but due to the concrete slab immediately below, this is only resulting in shallow defects, which in themselves are not a safety concern. Where deeper defects become evident through monitoring these will be repaired accordingly.*

We do recognise that this is a ward priority and have a resurfacing scheme for Coleman Road included on our reserve list. However, it will be a significant scheme and currently we anticipate this work will be undertaken in 2027/28 but this may be sooner if resources allow.

2. *Love Clean Streets is a great way for our residents to tell us about issues on the highway, as well as reporting many other issues in the*

city. Our highways team do respond to all reports, informing the resident that we have received and will investigate and confirming whether repair works will or won't be required.

Any repair works required are raised and managed through our highways asset management system. This system monitors all works deadlines and reports are regularly interrogated to ensure that works do not over run their target time. This is all part of an externally accredited ISO 9001 quality management system.

219. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

220. PARKING FEES AND USAGE UPDATE

The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation submitted a report to feedback to the EDTCE Scrutiny Committee on the impact of increase to on street and off-street parking charges implemented on 2nd June 2025.

The City Mayor introduced the item noting that the news of the NCP car park closures had been unexpected. Leicester City Centre had a surplus of parking provision and usage of NCP car parks fluctuated over time but tended to be low. The situation was further complicated by the separation of ownership and operational responsibilities. Discussions were taking place with the relevant parties.

A verbal addendum was given on issues surrounding the NCP car parks. Non-EDTCE members attended the meeting for the discussion of the verbal addendum.

Key points included:

- Administrators had informed the Council of the closures at short notice. Discussions took place, stakeholders were consulted and there was an effort to raise public awareness through the media.
- Additional availability for disabled parking was identified.
- Promotional activity was aimed at increasing awareness of public transport, alternative car parking sites, and the extended park and ride opening hours.
- Work was ongoing with owners, agents and the police to negate criminal activity at the closed NCP sites.

- Updates would continue to come as the matter progressed.

It was noted that questions had been submitted prior to the meeting, and it was agreed that some data could be given after the meeting. Questions and answers were as follows:

A progress breakdown for each of the car parks was requested.

It was explained that there were ongoing discussions with owners and operators. It was a commercially sensitive environment.

Possible timescales were requested.

It was suggested that for some of the carparks, outcomes could come within the following weeks.

An enquiry was made about the likelihood of contractual delays.

The Director of Planning, Development and Transportation replied that he was not party to the contractual discussions between the operators, agents and owners.

It was asked whether there were there any patterns and were officers monitoring updates?

It was explained that this was a national closure programme, and the Council was following the evolving situation.

It was enquired as to whether there was there was awareness surrounding potential closures of further NCP sites.

It was noted that The Council was not aware of other likely closures at this stage.

In response to further member discussion and questions, the following was noted:

- The closures of NCP car parks were part of a wider national issue.
- The Rutland Street closure was likely to have the most significant impact on the cultural quarter. There was a good standard of parking available at Dover Street and the Haymarket carpark. Communications were ongoing to highlight the benefits of parking at the two. So far, impact on business had not been seen.
- Plans were being developed on a new traffic regulation within the Cultural Quarter, near the Curve Theatre and there was also work to create more disabled parking.
- An independent operator managed the Park and Ride. Extending services for Birstall and Meynell's Gorse would require re-routing, further

investment and long-term planning.

- The Planning Enforcement Team would be putting actions into place to prevent the creation of unauthorised car parks on the empty sites.
- Regarding a question about other organisations taking over the NCP car parks, it was noted that potential opportunities might arise; however, the situation remained uncertain and would be kept under review until it had stabilised.
- There had not been any noted change in council parking income since the NCP closures.
- There were 5 NCP owners involved in the current closures. Regular contact had been established.
- Members felt it would be beneficial to consider regeneration land for parking next to the Phoenix Cinema and Arts Centre, if this could be restricted to prevent commuter parking.
- Regarding security at council owned carparks, there was investment in CCTV, onsite security and good lighting. Street lighting matters were being addressed. There was a hotspot police team in place, with six extra officers. Two further neighbourhood city centre police officers had been engaged. Under Project Vigilant, undercover police officers were working at night. Events were being held to obtain community feedback.
- The residential population was noted to have increased in the areas of Lee Circle and Abbey Street, and the associated policing implications were already under consideration.
- Contingency plans for other services could be considered at future scrutiny meetings.

Following the discussion of the verbal addendum regarding the NCP car parks - the members present who were not Commission members and the City Mayor left the meeting.

The Chair allowed Cllr Haq to remain and participate in the rest of the meeting. Following consideration of the verbal addendum, the Chair moved the meeting on to the item on Transport Affordability. Following the conclusion of the item on Transport Affordability, the consideration of the Parking Fees and Usage Update resumed with an update from the City Highways Director as follows:

- A report had been requested to come back to Scrutiny following a parking fee increase. The aim of the increase had been to address rising costs, revenue budget costing and to align the city with others and to provide sustainable transport solutions.
- There had been two elements to the tariff increase which were on and off street car parking.
- On street income had increased by 26%, this included the addition of the

Sunday pay and display charging. Financial targets had been met.

- There was a slight downturn in off street parking, the largest reduction had been in long-stay parking. Incomes were in line with target though.
- Income from all off streets parking had increased by 21% but the usage had declined by 7% Calculations on a pro-rata basis indicated that the forecast growth of £1m would be met.

In response to member comment and discussion, the following was noted:

- Dwell time information fed into income modelling and showed a decrease in commuter carparking. The Haymarket carpark was notably popular.
- Most people were opting to use the pay by phone method for parking fees.
- In response to queries regarding the impact of Sunday charging, it was noted that the tariff had not had a significant overall effect, though a greater reduction in usage had been seen at Dover Street.
- Lower city footfall reflected the impact of Covid, commuter traffic had decreased, online shopping had increased. Under the Heart of Leicester plan, new cultural facilities would contribute to the city development.
- There would be an annual review of parking fees.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.
- 3) Members would be kept informed on developments with the NCP situation.
- 4) Consideration would be given to reserving the land next to Phoenix for patrons.

Councillor Byrne left during the consideration of this item and Councillor Rae Bhatia left at the end of this item.

221. TRANSPORT AFFORDABILITY EDTCE SCRUTINY

The City Transport Director submitted a report, with a slide show presentation as attached, providing members of the commission with information on the affordability of transport options in the city, with particular reference to passenger transport.

The Chair then welcomed discussion with the attending Young People's Council Representatives. The following was noted:

- The free Hop bus service did not operate early enough to for some young people to travel to school or college. The routes did not meet some after school requirements. Delays were impacting pupil punctuality at school. The City Transport Director agreed to take this point for further consideration.
- For commercially operated bus companies, fares could be expensive for young people. The transition from child to adult fares at age 16 presented financial challenges for some young people. The City Transport Director confirmed that this could be considered and noted that young people's fares varied across the UK.
- There was a suggestion for reducing fares during the summer holidays.
- Safety was a concern and it was confirmed that all buses were fitted with CCTV.
- Double Decker buses seemed to be used during less busy times.

In response to member questions and discussion, the following was noted:

- Relevant results of the Young People's Survey were requested to come to scrutiny, including the aspects on safety.
- Following prior feedback from the Young People's Representatives, The City Transport Director had tasked officers to look into a number of matters, including, how issues on buses could be reported swiftly and the operation of double-decker buses.
- Costings on expanding the Hop Service could be brought back to the commission.
- The Hop was a specialised city centre bus service, wider factors would need to be addressed to extend operational hours. Demand could not be displaced from commercial bus operators. The age profile of users was not recorded.
- The flexi ticket was available for use across all providers, excepting the park and ride service.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.
- 3) Bus fares for 16-18 year olds would be considered.
- 4) For a review of how the Hop service could best meet the needs of young people.
- 5) For Hop running costs to be shared with the commission.
- 6) Bus operators to be engaged with on the impact of delays on users of school services.
- 7) Relevant sections of the Young People's Survey would come to scrutiny.

Following the conclusion of this item, the consideration of the Parking Fees and

Usage Update resumed.

222. ADULT EDUCATION - PATHWAYS TO DEVOLUTION

The Director of Tourism Culture and Economy submitted a report to update the Commission on the Leicester Adult Education service being invited to participate in a DfE programme called the Pathways to Devolution Pilot.

The Head of Adult Education attended the meeting to present the report.

Key points to note were as follows:

- The Department for Education (DfE) had allocated some money previously used to commission skills nationally to be devolved to Leicester from September. Options were being considered with a combination of delivery approaches. The models for the options were set out in the report: In House Delivery, Partnership Provision and Sub-Contracted Provision.
- It was aimed to expand provision in areas where the Council as a provider had seen unmet demand, for example in English as a Second Language (ESOL).
- Views were welcomed on how to use the funding, particularly on things that supported progression routes such as expanding the Skills Bootcamp offer and supporting creative industries.

In response to member questions and discussion, the following was noted:

- With regard to points made about avoiding potentially fraudulent sub-contractors, it was explained that due diligence was done prior to awarding contracts. The track record of the potential sub-contractor (including Ofsted records) were looked at. Additionally, the DfE had a list of organisations that the Council were not allowed to work with as they had a record of bad practice in the past. The training locations of potential sub-contractors were also visited and their staff met with.
- With regard to in-house provision, it was necessary to think about capacity. It was known where the Council were strong and where demand was high, so these areas were focussed on. It was also necessary to think about facilities and resources as there was no funding within this for capital expenditure. It was hoped to work with the Construction Hub. There was a preference for in-house provision where this was possible as sub-contracting had layers of management which made it less efficient. External providers could also sometimes access

different communities which is an alternative benefit.

- In terms of targeting vulnerable groups, it was suggested that this work could enhance or align with the Connect to Work programme. Additionally, groups such as those over 19 and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) would be worked with, and it was aimed to expand ESOL.
- In terms of support for women, it was noted that 70% of learners were women, so they were a core demographic. Courses could be offered part-time, and be flexible around school hours so that delivery models could be used to deliver courses and so courses could be accessed without being full-time. It was also aimed to be supportive and have a good environment, and to have appropriate venues.
- In response to points made about sewing classes and textiles, it was noted that skills in the textiles sector had been supported for many years. The organisation Fashion Enter had been supported and had set up the Fashion Technology Academy. They had received funding and support following the submission of an application. The Textile sector was a priority sector that the Council wished to support. The funding gave the ability to commission training and to meet local need.
- It was noted that the Council was not being given full flexibility as this was a nationally determined list of qualifications that could be offered, and is still subject to standard DfE requirements.

The Chair summarised, noting that the devolution of resources was welcomed, and whilst it was understood that there were bureaucratic hurdles, it was necessary to be positive about money coming to the Council for training. It was reiterated that it would be important to manage the risks around the sub-contracting element. Support for newcomers to the city who needed ESOL was welcomed. It was added that the voluntary sector was being worked with and they provided opportunities to attract people and bring them in.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account.

223. WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that the work programme would be revisited in the new municipal year.

The work programme was noted.

224. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further items of urgent business, the meeting finished at 19:49.