



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: MONDAY, 7 JANUARY 2013 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Waddington – Chair

Councillor Bhatti  
Councillor Chaplin  
Councillor Naylor  
Councillor Porter  
Councillor Shelton

Councillor Cassidy  
Councillor Clayton  
Councillor Newcombe  
Councillor Sandhu

\* \* \* \* \*

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Councillor Waddington was elected Chair for the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aqbany, Bhavsar, Dr Chowdhury, Marriott, and V. Patel.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Cassidy declared an Other Disclosable Interest in relation to agenda item 5, “City Deal”, in that he was a Board member of the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership and a Board member of Leicestershire Promotions.

Councillor Shelton declared Other Disclosable Interests as follows:-

- a) Agenda item 4, “2013/14 Budget Proposals”, in that he used the facilities at Evington Leisure Centre at a concessionary rate; and
- b) Agenda item 5, “City Deal”, in that he was a Board member of Leicestershire Promotions.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, these interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors' judgement of the public interest. They were not, therefore, required to withdraw from the meeting.

#### **4. 2013/14 BUDGET PROPOSALS**

The Strategic Director of City Development and Neighbourhoods presented a report seeking the views of the Joint Scrutiny Commissions on the draft budget plans for the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism and Transport and Climate Change portfolios.

It was noted in the report summary that the draft budget proposals were presented for consultation and that scrutiny comments would be collated for onward submission to the City Mayor and Executive, and consideration by Council.

The budget approach for each portfolio was reported as a portfolio overview, together with the schedules of proposed reductions; Equality Impact Assessment summaries; and standard forms for each proposed reduction item. In respect of the Equality Impact Assessment summaries it was noted that further detailed assessment documents were available for inspection on request.

The Assistant City Mayor; Culture, Heritage, Leisure and Sport was invited to present details of the portfolio overview insofar as it related to the remits of the Joint Scrutiny Commissions.

The City Mayor was also invited to answer questions put by Joint Commission members.

The following questions and concerns were raised in respect of the budget savings proposals as listed:

- Identify further savings from De Montfort Hall, Curve and Phoenix and in-house staffing, including options for greater sharing of management, staff and systems. (CN2)

The strategy of continued reduction of direct support for these venues was recognised. Further information concerning the total proposed reductions and the previously agreed reductions for 2013/14 and 2014/15 were requested. It was considered that the recent review of funding to the venues had showed that the venues were very different, and the way in which the overall reductions in the budget had been divided, could have very different impacts on the venues.

It was noted that during the review there had been an intention to see some back office functions merged had been identified together with a potential move towards the creation of a single management structure for two of the venues. The possibility for fundamental changes in the governance of the venues in the future was recognised.

Regular reports on the proposals for implementation of the grant reductions and the reorganisation of the venues were requested by the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission.

In reply to a question from a Commission member, the City Mayor clarified the future marketing of the former Haymarket Theatre. It was recognised that difficulties were experienced, by virtue of the building's inflexibility, position and internal structural and health and safety issues. It was requested that a status report on the prospects of the former Haymarket Theatre be submitted to a future meeting of the Economic Development Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission.

- Charge £1 per visit to over 60's living in the city for use of leisure facilities, replacing the current free access. (CN3)

The Chair commented that although this was outside the scope of the Joint Commissions' remit members would be invited to make comments on the proposed budget saving proposal. Observations raised were that the impact would be most directly felt by users whose continued health and fitness is a priority for the council and NHS in Leicester.

It was also considered that no decision should be taken on the issue until there has been consultation with and responses from The Forum for Older People, City Council health colleagues, and NHS colleagues within the city. The Joint Commission also considered that charges should not be introduced where visits to sports and leisure centres had been prescribed by GPs within the city in order to help raise take-up of exercise and fitness prescriptions.

- To cease providing local discretionary half-fare concessionary bus and rail travel before 9.30 am for those of state pensionable age (PTED 1)

The City Mayor replied to questions and comments in respect of the above proposal and members recognised that the existing regime was more generous than similar schemes within other local authorities, however it was considered that there may be significant groups who would be adversely affected, including users of leisure facilities under the CN3 heading above, and people going for hospital or other medical appointments.

It was reported in response to those concerns that a survey would be undertaken to find out who might be mostly affected by the proposal. This initiative was welcomed by members. It was considered that the proposal should be further considered following the budget consultation process, consultation with the Forum for Older People, and the results of the survey having been collated and analysed.

- Other issues concerning the budget proposals

The Joint Commission discussed the city centre budget and the review of funding of a place marketing strategy was noted. It was requested that a progress report on the strategy be submitted to a future meeting of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission. The appointment of an Interim Director of Property Services was welcomed in the context of the need to protect, rationalise and get the best use and revenue from the very widespread council asset portfolio.

The proposed reductions in the budget for transport to school/college for students including those with special needs were raised. It was considered that the potential impact on transport concerns in the city should be referred to the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission for comment.

The Joint Commission also discussed the consultation process that had been undertaken. Concern was expressed that the choice offered in the budget consultations had been too inflexible and allowed for too narrow a set of options. The Chair indicated that she would formally request a review of the way in which consultation options are presented, to include a wider look at the effectiveness of the consultation process.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the Overview Select Committee be asked to consider the following views of the Joint Scrutiny Commission, and advise the City Mayor of the Scrutiny function's view of the budget proposals:
  - a) In respect of budget reduction proposal CN3; regular reports on the proposals for implementation of the grant reductions and the reorganisation of the venues be submitted to the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission to include details of the total proposed reductions and also those reductions previously agreed for 2013/14 and 2014/15.
  - b) In respect of budget reduction proposal PTED1; the proposal should be further considered following the budget consultation process, consultation with the Forum for Older People, and the results of the survey having been collated and analysed.
- 2) that a status report on the prospects of the former Haymarket Theatre be submitted to a future meeting of the Economic Development Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission;

- 3) that the proposed reductions in the budget for transport to school/college for students including those with special needs be referred to the Transport and Climate Change Scrutiny Commission for comment;
- 4) that a progress report on the city centre budget, place marketing strategy and property management generally be submitted to a future meeting of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission; and
- 5) that the way in which consultation options are presented be reviewed to include a wider look at the effectiveness of the consultation process, be reviewed.

## **5. CITY DEAL**

The Strategic Director of City Development and Neighbourhoods presented a report which outlined the invitation made to the Council and other partners in the Leicester and Leicestershire LEP area to submit a city deal bid to Government and summarised the progress to date.

It was reported that work was progressing to submit an expression of interest to focus on infrastructure to unlock employment land. The key elements of the deal were clarified, including the process for the devolution of all relevant future national funding sources to a local level.

In respect of the next steps, it was reported that the expression of interest was being finalised and would be submitted by 15 January 2013. The results of the Government's assessment process would be announced during the week beginning 11 February 2013 and a final deal for the shortlisted areas would be negotiated by November 2013.

The Joint Commission noted the position and update.

## **6. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

