

Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND TOURISM SCRUTINY
COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 12 JULY 2018 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Khote (Chair)
Councillor Rae Bhatia (Vice Chair)

Councillor Bhavsar
Councillor Patel

Councillor Porter
Councillor Sandhu

In attendance:

Councillor Myers – Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for
the Entrepreneurial Councils Agenda
Sir Peter Soulsby – City Mayor

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dr Chowdhury.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Porter declared an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 10, “Putney Road Scheme – Consultation Update”, in that he had objected to the scheme as part of the consultation.

In accordance with the Council’s Code of Conduct, this interest was not considered so significant that it was likely to prejudice Councillor Porter’s judgement of the public interest. He therefore was not required to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.

3. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 12 April 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

AGREED:

That the Terms of Reference for this Commission be noted.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

AGREED:

That the membership of this Commission for 2018/19 be noted.

6. DATES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS

Members noted that the next meeting of the Commission would be rescheduled to a date in September 2018.

AGREED:

That the dates of meetings of this Commission for 2018/19 be noted.

7. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations, or statements of case had been received.

8. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

9. ORDER OF CONSIDERATION OF REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair advised the meeting that she would take the remaining items in a different order to that given on the agenda, due to the availability of Councillors.

10. BUSINESS WORKSPACE PORTFOLIO

The Head of Economic Regeneration submitted a report providing an update on the Economic Regeneration Workspace portfolio.

It was noted that turnover from the portfolio had now reached £1.4million and a revenue surplus was generated that could be reinvested in Council services. The success of this initiative had led other organisations and local authorities to view this as a good practice model for such portfolios and it was recognised that it also was effective when used as a catalyst in the regeneration of an area. An annual customer satisfaction survey was undertaken and the feedback used to help drive service improvements.

The Commission welcomed the report, but expressed some concern that warehouse facilities appeared to be developing in the county area, rather than in the city. In reply, the City Mayor explained that, as the city already was tightly developed, it was easier for businesses to find areas for warehousing outside of the city boundary. Although some well-established workspace schemes had been inherited from previous initiatives, this programme needed to be kept under review to ensure that the businesses developing through it continued to evolve. Work on this undertaken with the Chamber of Commerce had been very successful and the Chamber's input was welcomed.

The Head of Economic Regeneration noted that support also was provided to private sector businesses and could take the form of loans and support, as the initiative was not just about funding managed business workspace directly.

Some concern was expressed that the report did not contain information on upfront capital development costs for each workspace, so did not show actual costs. In reply, the Head of Economic Regeneration advised that the schemes in the report were largely funded through external grants that did not have to be repaid. The report was an update on the operational revenue performance of the seven centres. There had been some investment through the Council's capital programme over a number of years, which had been used to attract match-funding from external grant providers.

All of the centres were very different. For example, Makers Yard mostly contained sole traders, while businesses at Dock, (approximately 50 businesses employing approximately 200 people), were larger businesses working on innovative technology. Across the portfolio there were more than 200 businesses based in the seven centres, so it was a very dynamic environment, with businesses regularly moving in and out.

In response to queries, Members noted that works to complete the Friars Mill 2 development were due to start in the very near future, but an expected completion date was not known. Friars Mill currently had 100% occupancy. Leicester Food Park had nine businesses on site, employing 45 – 50 people.

AGREED:

That the update be noted.

11. PUTNEY ROAD SCHEME - CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Major Transport Projects Manager gave a presentation on the consultation exercise concerning the Putney Road transport scheme, a copy of which is

attached at the end of these minutes for information.

Members noted that those in favour of the scheme were mostly road users and those against were local residents. However, the City Mayor noted that a low response had been received to the consultation, which suggested that it was not a high level concern.

The Major Transport Projects Manager explained that baseline monitoring was needed before the scheme started. This information needed to be available to enable appropriate mitigation as required.

A member of the Commission suggested that this scheme was linked to a scheme to create a road along linked to Evesham Road and questioned why data about traffic flows along residential roads and possible time savings through not having to use Knighton Lane West was not included in the report. The Member also queried whether users of the cycle lanes in Knighton Road West would be delayed by the traffic lights along that route and expressed concern that traffic along Aylestone Road, which already had a very high level of air pollution, would increase. The Member further expressed concern that a request for the consultation to be discussed at the Aylestone Community Meeting had not been agreed.

In reply, the City Mayor stressed that the Putney Road scheme was not linked to any proposals to build an Aylestone bypass, so was being considered entirely on its own merits as a way of relieving traffic congestion and pressure on roads between Welford Road and Saffron Lane/Aylestone Road.

It was noted that the scheme was budgeted to cost £5million, of which £3.8million would be grant funded by the Department for Transport.

AGREED:

- 1) That the results of the consultation on the Putney Road Scheme be noted; and
- 2) That the Commission endorses proceeding to the next phase of delivery of the Putney Road Scheme.

Councillor Porter left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

12. SOCIAL VALUE CHARTER - UPDATE

The Head of Procurement submitted a report setting out the next steps needed to finalise, adopt and implement the Social Value Charter.

The Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for the Entrepreneurial Councils Agenda introduced the report, noting that a timetable to progress the project was set out in that report. Platforms were being designed through which it could be implemented, (such as CrowdFund Leicester), along with an internal training programme and a “users guide” for external suppliers. It was

anticipated that intermediaries such as Leicestershire Cares or the Employment Hub would support contracts to ensure that the social/community benefits being sought were achieved.

The Head of Procurement confirmed that liaison with external organisations was scheduled to start in early August. Once feedback had been received, the guide would be professionally designed, making sure that it was easy to use and practical.

One way in which social value would be obtained from contracts would be to identify which community projects needed support and contractors would assist those projects. It was hoped that potential suppliers also would suggest some ways in which they could provide social value. For example, the Highcross Centre already was making space available in empty units in the centre that projects seeking crowdfunding could use to promote themselves. Consideration also was being given to how this could be linked to ward community funding.

The Commission welcomed the report, stressing the importance of adding social value to contracts, as assistance provided in this way could make a significant difference to projects. However, some concern was expressed about whether suppliers would increase prices in their tenders to cover any costs arising from meeting the requirements of the Social Charter, but it was noted that this should not happen, as the social value sought would be proportionate to the value and nature of the contract.

Some concern also was expressed that the report stated there were no Equalities Implications at this stage and Members asked that these implications be added as soon as possible.

The Head of Procurement advised the Commission that the summary of Lead Member/Director engagement provided with the report was the first stage in the process. It was recognised that benefits could impact on more than one service area, requiring a holistic approach across the Council.

AGREED:

- 1) That the next steps required to finalise, adopt and implement the Social Value Charter be noted; and
- 2) That the Head of Procurement be asked to:
 - a) Circulate the draft Social Value Charter and Social Value Guide as soon they are available to all members of this Commission and all Members who participated in the Procurement and Social Value Task Group;
 - b) Include examples of good practice in the Social Value Guide, showing how social value has already been successfully secured through commissioning; and
 - c) Ensure that the Equalities Implications of the Social Value

Charter are added to documentation as appropriate.

13. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair reported verbally that the Bus Service Act Task Group had completed its evidence gathering, including evidence received at its last meeting from the Deputy City Mayor with responsibility for Environment, Public Health and Health Integration.

Since the Bus Services Act had been introduced in 2017 there had been a good supply of government guidance, media articles, best practice information and information from transport campaign groups to inform the work of the Task Group. Information gathering sessions also had been held with the local Bus Users Panel and bus operators.

A draft report of findings and recommendations would be compiled by the Task Group and could be presented to the next meeting of this Commission.

AGREED:

- 1) That the work programme be received and noted; and
- 2) That the draft report of the Bus Service Act Task Group be considered at the next meeting of this Commission.

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.01 pm

Minute Item 11

01/08/18

Putney Road scheme

Consultation update

EDTT Scrutiny



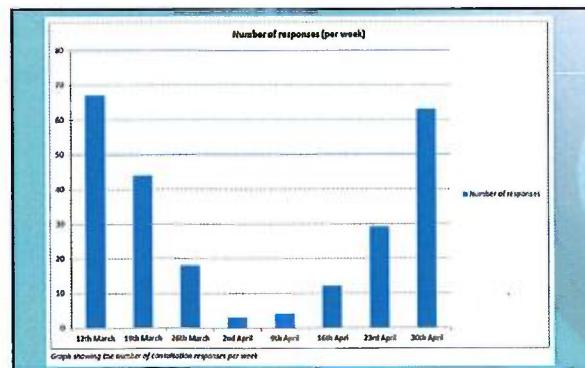
Publicity and events

- 2nd March – 29th April (8 weeks)
- c.3,500 leaflets distributed, 111 letters sent to businesses around Commercial Sq.
- 4 drop-in exhibitions in Saffron/Commercial Sq./Clarendon Park – mixture of daytime and evenings
- Permanent display at Aylestone Leisure Centre (staffed two hours per week)
- Castle Ward meetings 21st Nov & 13th Feb
- Saffron Ward meeting 8th March



Response

- 291 responses in total, mainly through the online consultation
- Exhibitions had low attendance, including Clarendon Park (10 people)
- 25.4% positive, 60.1% negative, 14.4% neutral/balanced
- Clear themes in the responses
- Castle Ward meeting strongly opposed, Saffron Ward strongly in favour



For

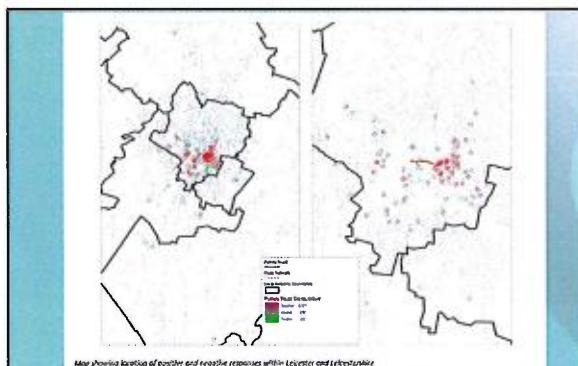
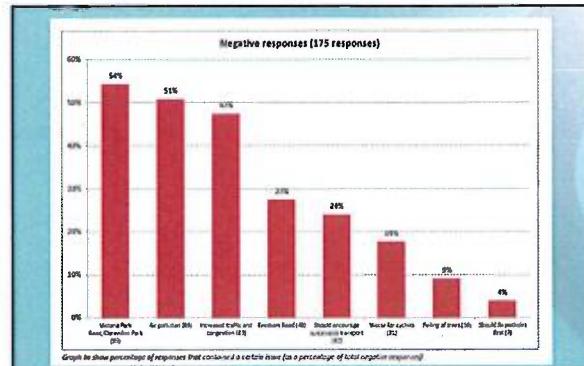
- Reduce congestion
- Easier journeys
- Improve travel time
- Respondents focused on how it might affect their existing journeys



Against

- Increased traffic on Victoria Park Road – worried about impact on Clarendon Park
- Increased traffic levels and pollution in the area
- Possible link to Evesham Road
- LCC should encourage sustainable transport
- 'Putney Road Say No' campaign
- Respondents focused on how it might affect the local area





Victoria Park Rd/Clarendon Park concerns

- Victoria Park Road currently designated a B Road and used as an orbital route
- Expected to take through traffic
- Off carriageway cycle lanes, and several signalised crossing points
- Predicted moderate increase will remove traffic from more residential streets and provide shorter journeys
- Impact on Clarendon Park to be monitored and, if necessary, action taken



Air Pollution concerns

- Increase in emissions at the junctions
- Overall benefit to city emission levels from shorter routes and less congestion



Traffic concerns

- Increase in traffic on Putney Road, but creates benefits on other parts of the network
- Journeys redistributed from other routes
- Less traffic on residential routes
- Junctions designed to manage high volumes of traffic



Evesham Rd concerns

- Putney Rd scheme provides benefits independent of other highway schemes
- Evesham Rd is part of the Local Plan process
- Benefits/impacts yet to be quantitatively investigated
- Likely to be debated at Full Council in the Autumn



Sustainable Transport concerns

- Council has to take a balanced approach to transport improvements
- Scheme does benefit cars, but reduced congestion will benefit other users
- Council delivering a programme of NPIF-funded bus pinch point schemes
- Scheme does interrupt a well used cycle route – junction being designed to reduce the impact on cyclists



Scheme Benefits

- Increases in traffic are manageable
- Redistributions existing journeys, reducing pressure on key parts of the network
- Provides benefits independent of other schemes



Scheme Benefits – shorter journeys

- Redistribution of existing trips being made
- More sensible, shorter east-west routes
- Less congestion on surrounding roads
- Less pollution
- Less traffic using residential streets



Scheme Benefits – improved access

- Access to
 - developments
 - education institutions
 - M1
- More resilient network
- Increased attractiveness for development



Next Steps – monitoring strategy

- Outline study for "before and after" data
- Highlight areas where the Council would want to note, monitor, and action results



Next Steps – monitoring strategy

- Traffic flows along roads and streets, including residential areas
- Pedestrian and cycle figures
- Pollution modelling



Next Steps – Design

- Complete design
- Develop cycle routing
- Work with UoL regarding the Freemans Park development
- Engage contractor



Questions?

