

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 8 September 2021.

PRESENT

Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC (in the Chair)

Mr. T. Barkley CC  
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC  
Mr. S. J. Galton CC  
Mr. Max Hunt CC  
Mr. J. Morgan CC

Mrs. R. Page CC  
Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC  
Mr J. Poland CC  
Mr. T. J. Richardson CC

In attendance

Mr L. Breckon CC (Lead Member for Resources)  
Mr P. Bedford CC (Lead Member and County Council representative on the LLEP Board)  
Mr Mandip Rai (Director of the LLEP)  
Mr Kevin Harris (Chair of the LLEP Board)  
Mr Rob Thornhill (Joint Strategic Planning Manager for Leicester and Leicestershire)

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

28. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

29. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

30. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

31. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting. The following declarations were made:

Mr T. Richardson CC and Mr J. Morgan CC declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 (Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) Annual Report) as they were both Directors on the LLEP Board.

All Members of the Commission who were also members of a district council declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Strategic Planning and Growth related matters).

32. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

33. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

34. Medium Term Financial Strategy - Latest Position

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which would be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021 regarding the 2021/22 revenue budget and capital programme monitoring position as at the end of July (period 4), and which sought approval to change to the previously agreed 2021-2025 capital programme and the approach to updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2022 – 2026. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Director highlighted the following:

- The current revenue position was £6m better than previously reported to Cabinet at the end of period 2, but there remained a £12m overspend, primarily due to 2 key areas: the High Needs Block (Children & Family Services) and Adult Social Care (Adults & Communities).
- High Needs Block – A £6m overspend above the grant had been accounted for. However, the overspend had now increased from £3m to £9m. Whilst additional capacity had been and continued to be added to address the problem, use of costly, independent settings continued to increase. This was a historical problem and whilst grant levels had risen, this did not match the pace of rising demand.
- Adult Social Care – There had been little change to the £13m overspend previously reported. The level of demand and the cost of services required both in home and residential care settings continued to rise. As a result of Covid, some patients were being discharged earlier from hospital often with more complex needs placing additional pressure on the service. Also, whilst less people were being placed in residential care homes in line with Council policy, providers were increasing their fees to compensate for falling numbers which added to the current position. For home care services, during the last year additional Covid funding had been received from the NHS which had helped, but this was time limited. Discussions with Health partners to secure additional income for the longer term continued, though this would not be sufficient to address the current overspend and pressure on this budget would likely continue in 2022.
- The main change to the Capital Programme was the increase in expenditure for the two Melton road schemes. This included establishment of a portfolio risk allocation to help manage the unavoidable risks associated with large complex schemes. This also provided a greater level of transparency than including all the contingency within individual schemes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

### Revenue budget

- (i) It was questioned whether the Adult Social Care Target Operating Model (TOM) continued to be the right approach given the significant overspend in this area and the recent impacts of Covid on the social care sector. Members noted that the transition of care to support more people in their own home was being managed gradually to allow the market time to adapt. However, Covid had significantly increased the number of people immediately wishing to remain at home and this had driven the speed of change over the last year. The Director confirmed that the TOM was still considered the right approach, this being preferred by residents and ultimately reducing the Services accommodation costs. However, time was now needed to allow the market to catch up, as originally forecast. The position would be monitored.
- (ii) Significant concerns were raised about the continued rise in SEND costs and the increasing High Needs Block (HNB) deficit. The Council's approach to build locally based SEND provision aimed to reduce reliance on expensive independent provision had been successful. However, demand had continued to outstrip supply, meaning the use of such expensive independent provision had in reality remained unchanged and costs had therefore continued to rise.

A member commented that whilst ensuring children had their needs met should be a priority, it was necessary for these costs to be brought under control given that any deficit on the HNB had to be met from the Council's own resources. Members challenged what the Council's strategy to address this was given that a cumulative High Needs funding gap of £26m had been forecast.

A member suggested that reliance on increased funding from the Government at some future point would not be sufficient. Another Member commented that increasing provision whilst part of the answer, would not provide a solution to the whole problem and continuing to focus on upfront demand, as well as considering appropriate levels of eligibility criteria would be important.

The Lead Member for Resources, Mr L. Breckon CC, provided assurance that work was underway within the Department to address this issue. The Director confirmed that this was a key priority for the Authority and given the work being undertaken by the Department, this might benefit from further scrutiny by the Children and Family's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman of the Children and Family's Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised the Commission that it had received reports on this issue and so was aware of the difficulties faced by the Department, but it would take on board the comments now made.

### Capital programme

- (iii) The approach adopted in identifying capital projects was challenged and a member questioned whether a joint view was taken across departments about which capital schemes to prioritise based on those which might generate the best and quickest revenue return. For example, was account taken of those road schemes which would facilitate the speedier delivery of larger housing

developments, which would in turn generate increased income from council tax.

Members noted that targeting resources whilst taking account of wider impacts on the Council was an approach being adopted more often and the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road scheme was an example of this. However, there were risks to the Council when forward funding such infrastructure projects, with the Council being dependent on developers delivering housing in a timely manner to recoup its costs via section 106 developer contributions. It was also often reliant on the availability of Government grants. The Director agreed that taking a holistic view of development needs in an area, rather than a scheme by scheme view, was necessary and of benefit to the Council.

- (iv) Members sought an update regarding the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road scheme given the escalating costs of £85m detailed in the capital programme. It was questioned whether formal commitment had now been given by the Cabinet to deliver both parts of the scheme and whether a risk sharing agreement had been agreed with the Borough Council. The Head of Law confirmed that there would be a further report to the Cabinet regarding the proposed scheme and that legal discussions regarding the risk sharing agreement were continuing. The Director undertook to clarify the up to date position regarding decisions taken by the Cabinet after the meeting.
- (v) A Member questioned the Council's wider approach to sharing the risks it faced in delivering infrastructure necessary to support local plan commitments with district councils and sought further information on how it planned to manage this for the future.

The Lead Member for Resources highlighted that several district councils were currently reviewing their local plans and as part of that process the County Council's Growth Service and other Departments were liaising with those district partners regarding their infrastructure needs. He referred to the report on strategic planning matters to be considered by the Commission later on the agenda which provided details of this work.

#### RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on the 2021/22 revenue budget and capital programme monitoring position as at the end of period 4 be noted;
- (b) That the proposed change to the previously agreed 2021-2025 capital programme and the approach to updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2022 – 2026 be noted;
- (c) That the Chairman of the Children and Family's Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to take account of the comments now made in respect of the High Needs Block overspend and the potential need for closer scrutiny of work taking place in the Department to address this;
- (d) That a further report be provided at an appropriate time on the work being undertaken by the Council to address the risks, in particular financial risks, it faced in delivering infrastructure across the County.

### 35. Corporate Asset Investment Fund Annual Report 2020/21

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which set out the performance of the Corporate Asset Investment Fund (CAIF) for 2020/21. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

In response to questions raised, the Head of Strategic Property Services confirmed the following:

- The gross income across the Corporate Asset Investment Fund portfolio was £7.46m.
- No substantial developments on Council owned farmland had been accounted for in the current financial year. Planning gain on such land had been shown in the previous years accounts and so had already been transferred into the 'development land' category.
- The Council acquired most of the farmland it currently owned in the 1920's. New land was currently acquired on a 'one in – one out' basis i.e. if the Council were to sell land for residential or development use it would seek to replace that within the portfolio. The purchase of further land would also be considered where this adjoined an existing farm holding.
- The Council currently owned 7,700 acres of farmland. Each holding was let and lettings were managed by the Strategic Property Services team.
- Office premises owned by the Council tended to be let on a 10 year lease with a 5 year break clause, or on a 15 year lease with a 10 year break clause. The Lease of the new premises built at LUSEP was for a 15 year period with a break clause at 10 years. Income from LUSEP would be reported next year, as this financial year the tenant had the benefit of a rent free period.
- A full review and valuation exercise was undertaken of every property asset owned by the Council every year. This was undertaken by the Department's in house valuers, taking account of national comparables and other bench marks.

Arising from subsequent discussion, the following matters arose:

- (i) A member queried whether legislation relating to the delivery of large scale infrastructure sites which prevented large housing developments within a certain distance would apply to the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange proposals and therefore affect the development proposed at the M69 J2 Stoney Stanton site. The Head of Strategic Property Services reported that this would not affect proposals and no issues had been raised during discussions with the National Infrastructure Commission which envisaged housing being delivered on the adjoining site. Nor had issues been raised by the district council or Tritax who were bringing forward the rail freight proposals.
- (ii) Members challenged the approach to invest extra capital into the Fund to support long term projects considering the immediate short-term financial pressures faced by the Council, as detailed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy monitoring report considered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Lead Member, Mr L. Breckon CC, agreed it was important for him and Scrutiny to test the current approach to invest in CAIF projects. However, he provided assurance that he and officers looked at each commercial investment proposal critically to ensure its long-term benefits outweighed any potential short term gain. He confirmed that where this was not the case then consideration

would be given to selling an asset to realise its value to offset other budget pressures.

The Director confirmed that performance of the Fund had been exceptional, it having generated significant additional income for the Council for several years. This had been allocated to support front-line services and reduce the need for savings which might have otherwise been necessary. On balance, the current approach was considered still to be the right way forward.

A member commented that the ongoing long-term revenue benefit currently outweighed any short term one off benefits that could be realised by the sale of an asset. This was despite the economic pressures faced by the Council during 2020 when the Fund had still managed to generate an overall return of 6.1% which was excellent in the circumstances.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the performance of the Corporate Asset Investment Fund during 2020/21 be noted and welcomed;
- (b) That the current approach to invest in CAIF projects be supported but that this continue to be monitored and kept under review.

#### 36. East Midlands Shared Service Annual Performance Update

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the performance of East Midlands Shared Services in 2020/21 financial year. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

A member sought clarification on what had been done to address the issues arising out of the external audit of the finance system, in particular the ability for admin officers to assign themselves additional access. The Commission was reassured that following implementation of the new Oracle Cloud system, this functionality had been removed and an approval mechanism introduced. This ensured appropriate controls were now in place to prevent such access in the future.

In response to a question raised, Members noted that the cost of laptops purchased to enable staff to work from home as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic had totalled £75,000.

RESOLVED:

That the performance of East Midlands Shared Services in 2020/21 be noted.

#### 37. Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Annual Update

Members received a presentation by the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) Chief Executive, Mr Mandip Rai, and Chair of the LLEP Board, Mr Kevin Harris, on progress during 2021 and the LLEPs priorities for 2022. A copy of the presentation slides marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Rai and Mr Harris to the meeting as well as Lead Member Mr P. Bedford CC, the Council's representative on the LLEP Board.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- (i) A member questioned how projects which received LLEP funding were monitored and their outputs measured to assess the extent to which they benefited the local economy. Members noted that the LLEP remained in constant contact with successful bidders to monitor their performance and ensure they achieved the milestones and outputs set out in their business case. Such performance was considered regularly by the LLEP's Investment Panel and the LLEP Board and ultimately the LLEP was required to submit details of project outputs on a quarterly basis to Government. Such information was publicly available and published on the LLEP's website. A Member suggested that it would be helpful if in future reports to the Commission an overview of the outputs achieved by specific projects could be included so that Members could see how the allocation of resources to those projects had benefited the local economy.
- (ii) The allocation of £6m to the Sports Park Pavilion at Loughborough University was challenged. A member questioned if and how the extension of an existing scheme benefited the local economy and whether funding could have been better spent on an entirely new project. Members noted that the Chair of the LLEP Board had been involved in discussions with Government for some years regarding its plans to relocate some offices out of Whitehall. A catalyst event to stimulate the move was necessary and this scheme was put forward given the specific accommodation requirements needed and other businesses within the locality. The scheme had been a success as the Government's Anti-doping Agency had now relocated to the area. It was hoped that this would now pave the way for further Government office relocations in the future. It was suggested that improved communications on this scheme would be beneficial to demonstrate this was not a simple extension of an existing facility, but a strategically selected project to secure the relocation of an entire government department which was therefore good value for money.
- (iii) A member questioned how financial risks for projects were measured and monitored and what contingencies were put in place to mitigate these. Members noted that the business cases submitted by bidders were required to include a contingency element, particularly for capital projects. If successful it was then their responsibility to work within the agreed funding envelope. If costs were to escalate, the bidders would need to source further alternative funding elsewhere. Assurance was provided however, that rigorous scrutiny of each business case was undertaken before recommendations were presented to the Programme Panel and thereafter to the Board for approval.
- (iv) Mr Bedford CC, Lead Member for Ways of Working and Covid Recovery, provided assurance as the County Council's representative on the LLEP Board of the rigorous processes undertaken by the LLEP when considering projects and allocating funding. He highlighted, however, that as the link between the Council and the LLEP, if the Commission or any of its members had any particular queries or concerns about specific projects these could be referred to him and he would seek to address them through the Board as appropriate.
- (v) Members noted that there was a strong balance across districts and the City in respect of local growth fund programme projects. However, when funding was announced by Government, the LLEP operated an open call process as set out in its local assurance framework. This meant that the LLEP would invite projects

from all partners. A rigorous Green book appraisal of those put forward would then be undertaken and each project scored before being put before the Appraisals Board and thereafter the LLEP Board for consideration and approval. Members noted that strict conditions were often attached to monies made available by Government which limited the discretion of the LLEP when allocating such resources.

- (vi) In response to a question raised, the Chief Executive of the LLEP advised that no partner organisation was penalised on the basis they had benefited from past funding. Each project was assessed on its own merits against a very clear set of strategic objectives agreed for the benefit of Leicester and Leicestershire.
- (vii) Members noted that the timeframe for both submitting and considering bids in line with Government requirements was often very tight. Also, conditions around the timing of delivery of projects was also often very short. Many LEPs had struggled to secure funding as a result. However, the LLEP had a strong pipeline of projects which were shovel ready and had therefore benefited as a result. The Chair of the LLEP Board said collating this list was a fundamental part of what the LLEP was there to do, to ensure it knew where projects were and that there was an abundance of them ready to put forward, as soon as Government funding became available.
- (viii) Skills shortages continued to be an issue generally, but a member questioned what steps were being taken by the LLEP to proactively support specific areas, for example the current lack of HGV drivers. Members were pleased to note that a more coordinated approach was being taken to lobby Government through the national LEP network, as well as through direct contacts in Government and through local MPs. Logistics played a strong part in the Leicestershire economy and so the LLEP worked hard to gather insight and intelligence and provide feedback at a national level on this issue.
- (ix) Members welcomed the approach of the LLEP in working with schools, colleges and universities to build links between business need and education provision, and to ensure there was a clear understanding of the jobs market and skills required. Members supported the approach of the LLEP to also set out for young people and education providers alike, what the future might look like based on economic investment in the area. Members were particularly pleased to hear about the work of the Careers Hub and the success of speed networking events held in the area and which brought together students aged 11 – 16, and representatives from over 100 employers.
- (x) With regard to the proposed creation of the new Fenwick's office base a member questioned whether the recent increased working from home had affected those proposals. The Chair of the LLEP Board advised that it was too early to fully understand what the long term impact on people's working preferences might be, or how employers might want to accommodate future hybrid working. However, members were reassured that part of the Fenwick's model was to create a flexible workspace which would suit alternative ways of working going forward. Given current circumstances, member were advised that it was likely this and other workspace in the City would be in very high demand and something that was replicated as a model going forward.



- (xi) A member expressed concern that workspace in the City was not supported with affordable parking and that this disadvantaged those in the County seeking work in the City, particularly in lower skilled and therefore lower salaried positions.
- (xii) Place marketing would be key to attracting people outside the area with skills and expertise necessary to fill jobs which could not be filled locally. Members agreed it would be important to attract new talent as well as support the growth of a locally skilled workforce.
- (xiii) Members noted the current national review of LEPs, the outcome of which was expected later in the year. In terms of future possible changes, the Chair of the LLEP Board advised that, in his view, the role of LEPs in future capital funding projects would likely cease. LEPs had not been created for this purpose and so were not particularly well resourced to oversee and support such work. Originally the key role and function of LEPs was to build partnerships and bring together key stakeholders from the public and private sectors and Mr Harris suggested that LEPs still had an important role to play in that regard. For example, LEPs had played a significant role and had been a key point of contact both during the pandemic and in response to issues arising from Brexit.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation and the update now provided on the LLEP be noted;
- (b) That Mr Rai and Mr Harris be thanked for attending the meeting and answering members questions.

38. Strategic Planning and Growth Related Matters

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on a number of key strategic planning and other related matters which affect the County Council, and how the Growth Service and others were working together to address these. The report also provided an update on the uplift in housing numbers allocated to Leicester City and the implications of this for district council housing numbers and their current local plan proposals, as well as the County Council as infrastructure provider. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Rob Thornhill, the Joint Strategic Planning Manager for Leicester and Leicestershire, to the meeting.

In presenting the report the Assistant Chief Executive highlighted the substantial increase in population predicted across the County over the next five years and the associated need to accommodate housing and employment growth, and for the County Council to provide the infrastructure to support this. Members noted that the Growth Service had been established to better manage the Council's contribution to the growth agenda and in particular the financial risk this brought to the Council. The Assistant Chief Executive said the Service had been building positive relationships with district councils and had sought to engage early on their local plan proposals to address the issues detailed in the report.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- (i) Members welcomed the report which provided a useful overview of what was a complex and ever changing picture. Members agreed the need for the County Council to take a proactive approach given the impact growth would have on the localities and both County and district councils.
- (ii) A member raised concerns about the uplift in housing numbers to be delivered by Leicester City and the real impact this would have on district councils that would have to meet the increased unmet need. The member argued that it was clearly impossible for Leicester City to accommodate the uplift given it already could not meet its original allocation. They suggested that the uplift would indirectly deliver what the Government's original proposed change to the current planning system (i.e. to change the standard method for calculating minimum annual local housing requirements) aimed to deliver; a proposal which had received strong objection and so had been withdrawn.
- (iii) In light of the impact of Covid-19 on Leicester City, a member suggested that fresh consideration was needed on how it could deliver more housing, perhaps in place of some office and retail space given these sectors had been so badly affected. The Member suggested that other cities such as Manchester had accommodated more housing and this had been hugely successful in bringing new life into the City. Members noted the work being undertaken by the City Council to address the uplift and that it would receive a further update on the outcome of this work at an appropriate time.
- (iv) A member questioned whether, given recent changes (e.g. the City uplift and the loss of the planned A46 Expressway), it was now accepted that a fundamental review of the Strategic Growth Plan was necessary. Mr Thornhill advised that the overall strategic view as set out in the SGP remained unchanged. Essentially the Plan focused growth towards Leicester, recognised it as a central city, recognised the role of market towns, and focused growth in identified key areas (e.g. north west Leicestershire, in and around the proposed Freeport, the area around the A5 corridor, and around the proposed Melton Mowbray distributor road etc.) which had not changed despite the impacts of Covid. Members noted the detailed work, including a strategic transport assessment, commissioned by the MAG (Members Advisory Group) which would provide a more up to date picture of growth needs in the area. Mr Thornhill explained that the outcome of this work may or may not support the SGP and may or may not therefore trigger the need for a review, but that this would be considered comprehensively by all partners of the MAG next year.
- (v) Members commented that large infrastructure projects identified to support specific growth schemes were reliant on national funding. If not secured, this would mean a review of the planned infrastructure was needed, not a review of the SGP. A member emphasised that ultimately not delivering the A46 Expressway did not affect the number of houses to be delivered in that area.
- (vi) Mr Thornhill emphasised that the 35% uplift in Leicester City posed an immediate issue which could not be addressed by long term strategic sites identified in the SGP which covered the period from 2031 to 2050. An alternative approach was therefore needed. The MAG would consider all the options available once the outcome of the commissioned assessments were known and the position made

clearer.

- (vii) Members welcomed the approach being adopted to work collectively to address the unmet need of the City Council which it was acknowledged was in a very difficult position. A member commented that Leicestershire was unique in that it had 9 local authorities represented on the MAG, all seeking to collectively find the best possible solution to the growth requirements identified across Leicester and Leicestershire.
- (viii) It was highlighted that the number of houses needing to be delivered were known and were as set by Government. The MAG, however, played a key role in considering cooperatively how best to locate these and how to secure maximum infrastructure funding. A member emphasised that the commitment of the County Council and the City Council to work cooperatively in this regard was clear given the involvement of the Leader and the City Mayor on that Group.
- (ix) In response to questions regarding the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, Mr Thornhill confirmed that this would look at a range of issues similar to what the HEDNA had considered in 2017 (excluding housing need which was calculated in line with a national formula). It would look at Leicester City's unmet need and how this might be redistributed, housing mix, the need for employment land and growth, and the number of homes needed to support that employment growth. Members noted that this work would align with that undertaken by the LLEP in support of its Economic Growth Plan ensuring for the first time, greater consistency in approach on planning and economic growth aspirations across Leicester and Leicestershire.
- (x) It was noted that the evidence from the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment would be important for district council local plan preparations. Whilst the timing might not be ideal for some, work was being undertaken as quickly as possible. It was intended that the evidence from the Assessment would be published early next year, alongside an agreed Statement of Common Ground.
- (xi) Members noted that the City Council had done a huge amount of work so far in trying to maximise its capacity to deliver its increased housing allocation. Mr Thornhill clarified that whilst there were political pressures, the ultimate test was a planning one and the bar was very high. The local plan process was in depth and required a huge amount of work and evidence. The local plan examination itself could take up to a year and the City Council would need to demonstrate it had left no stone unturned if it was unable to meet its housing need.
- (xii) Mr Thornhill emphasised that Leicester and Leicestershire was a housing market area which up to 2036 had to accommodate in excess of 85000 homes. Therefore, even if the City were able to deliver an additional few thousand homes, overall, this would have limited strategic impact across the area.
- (xiii) It was hoped that the Government's response to the Planning White Paper would be published in the Autumn. In response to questions raised, Mr Thornhill advised that it was unclear what the Government's approach would be until that time and therefore it was not clear what impact this might have on current district council local plans. The expectation was that there would be a transition process for any new proposals brought into force.

- (xiv) In terms of climate change and questions regarding how local authority local plans could align with their environment and zero carbon targets, Mr Thornhill advised that whilst many had tried to grapple this issue it continued to be a challenge as the Government would not allow local authorities to set their own local standards i.e. building standards continued to be set nationally. Local Plans could, however, have an impact around where developments were located i.e. located to have minimum impact by being close to larger settlements and/or employment areas and where transport infrastructure was already in place.
- (xv) It was suggested that the County would benefit from a consistent policy to support climate change that could be referenced in each district councils local plan. Members noted, however, that the MAG operated to fulfil the duty to cooperate and did not have any decision making powers to insist on such a common policy approach. This would be a matter for each individual district council to determine.
- (xvi) Members acknowledged that logistics was a hugely challenging sector to plan for. Mr Thornhill highlighted that this was largely because it didn't operate over traditional scales or boundaries. The market operated for example in this region over 21 local authority areas covering Milton Keynes, Birmingham across to Nottingham. This made sites difficult to plan for and it was not uncommon for there to be a focus in one area more than others.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update now provided be welcomed and noted;
- (b) That Mr Thornhill be thanked for attending the meeting and for providing the responses and additional information sought by the Scrutiny Commission;
- (c) That a further report be presented at an appropriate time in 2022 providing an update on Leicester City's local plan proposals and the outcome of the work commissioned by the MAG.

39. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Commission had been moved and would now be held on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 10.00am.

10.00 am - 1.30 pm  
08 September 2021

CHAIRMAN