

MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 2.00 P.M.

ORDER PAPER

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event of having to evacuate officers will be able to advise and be on hand to assist any people with disabilities.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CHAIRMAN will make his announcements.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2
MINUTES
(Pages 3 to 16)

The CHAIRMAN will move and MR ORSON will second:

'That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5th July 2023, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The CHAIRMAN will invite members who wish to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4
QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1) (2) & (5)

(A) Question by MR BRAY

"I have had a number of representations from residents in my division about holiday provision for disabled children in the Leicestershire County Council area.

In the email the residents say:

Holiday Clubs provided during the school holidays offer children the chance to meet other children, socialise, increase social and learning skills and try out new hobbies and have fun.

For the families of disabled children, holiday clubs also provide the opportunity for parents to have a break from their caring responsibilities and spend time with their other children. In addition, they help disabled children to manage the transition back to the new school term.

However, families with disabled children too often find there is a lack of holiday club provision that can meet their child or family's needs, leaving them without support or fun activities over the holiday period, creating further pressure for the whole family, families who often live stressful and isolated lives.

New research from the Disabled Children's Partnership has found that the majority of families with disabled children (81%) would like a holiday club for their disabled child during the six-week break: 40% to enable them to work and 77% so their child can socialise with other children.

But just 10% have found something suitable and only 4% of everyone surveyed said they'd found something for the days and hours they need.

The parents and grandparents of the children are asking that the County Council carry out an audit of holiday provision in the Leicestershire County Council area to see how well it meets the needs of families with disabled children and take steps to address any shortfall. Would the Leader commit to undertake to do this and report the findings to all members?"

Reply by MRS TAYLOR

"The County Council is committed to ensuring children with disabilities and their families are supported during school term time and school holidays with inclusive activities that support their play and leisure, progression within their ability, as well as offering an opportunity for parents to have a break from their caring duties for those children whereby time away from their parents is age appropriate and enhances their identity, self-esteem, learning and development. This area comes under our short breaks offer.

There are many clubs and activities available across Leicestershire in the local offer, there is a local offer Facebook page that advertises opportunities. There is a nominal fee for parents and carers to access these resources as a personal choice across the year including the summer school term holiday. Disability allowances can also be used.

Whilst we will not undertake an audit of holiday provision, as part of our commitment to improving opportunities we are currently reviewing our short breaks provision across Leicestershire and we are working closely with the SEND parent carer hub, gaining parents voice to create more choice and opportunity for the use of direct payments, and local short breaks provision year-round and during school term breaks. A survey for parents/carers in receipt of short breaks has recently closed. We are currently reviewing the responses which will help to shape support in the future for children and their families.

Children who meet the threshold for assessment and services across the Child and Family Wellbeing Service or Social Care Children's Disability Service are offered an assessment of need for short breaks and additional parenting/carers

advice and support in line with needs. We know there is a higher number of providers of specialist support in the north of the County compared with the south. We have a commitment to developing this and work with local providers to provide local services that meet the local need.

Our Defining Children's Services for the Future improvement plan is embedded and in relation to short breaks we are reviewing how short breaks are accessed utilising a blend of direct payments and commissioned services, so to give children and their families more choice. The Children and Families Department can provide updates and assurance to members on the improvement plan and review."

(B) Question by MR HUNT

"1. Our current Local Transport Plan* tells us that "*Evidence from our research into the impact of housing growth in the Leicester Urban Area of the county in particular, suggests that encouraging people to change travel behaviour, supported by improvements to public transport and walking and cycling facilities, will reduce the impacts of population growth on the performance of our transport system and road network*".

What would those impacts be in terms of traffic congestion and what other areas of the county are likely to be affected?

2. With the exception of some demand responsive interventions, what significant improvements to public transport, if any, have been effective in mitigating housing growth?
3. The plan states that available evidence *points towards the need to investigate, and possibly introduce, some form of active demand management during the second half of this strategy*. Accepting that we are well in the second half of the LTP strategy, and we are regularly warned of the demands on cost and scale of measures to mitigate housing growth, what form of active demand management has been investigated, and what might be introduced?
4. Do you intend to make a similar offer in the next Local Transport Plan, whenever that may be?"

* [Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 \(LPT3 Section 5.83, Monitoring\)](#)

Reply by MR O'SHEA

"1. The evidence base (research) for the current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) was developed over 10 years ago, based on data and information available at that time and predating the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan 2050 (SGP) and the changed emphasis of strategic spatial distribution of housing across Leicestershire that it sets out.

Thus, it is not possible to directly answer this question relating to a quote

based on out of date evidence. A new evidence base is being developed for the Authority's next Local Transport Plan (LTP4), which will reflect the SGP and take an up to date look at the future impacts of population growth across all areas of Leicestershire. The conclusions of this evidence work will be reflected in LTP4.

2. Public Transport provision and infrastructure for new developments is secured through the planning process and we continue to work with operators to ensure such provision is attractive and viable in order to mitigate traffic impacts and single occupancy vehicle journeys. Some recent examples include the extension of service My15, which commenced on 25th June 2023 in Castle Donington to serve the Park Lane development and a new service in Hinckley (service 11), which commenced on 15th April 2023 to serve Hollycroft Grange. In addition, through the Leicestershire Enhanced Partnership we have a mechanism to work closely with bus operators to seek opportunities to address the challenges facing rural passenger transport in the County.
3. In recent reports to the Cabinet, officers have made clear that, based on recent evidence work, significant changes in people's behaviours and expectations will be required if the impacts of population growth on the County's transportation system (and on carbon levels) are to be lessened significantly. However, during the LTP3 period no form of demand management has been investigated. While we would have anticipated being able to take forward some form of demand management in the latter part of the LTP period at the time we wrote the document, the reality around public support and mechanisms to achieve this have proved to be challenging.

To demonstrate this, the idea of 'pay as you drive' does not appear to be included in the thinking of the Government as to a way to fill the deficit in national taxes generated by the move away from petrol or diesel powered vehicles to electric vehicles. Additionally, the Mayor of Leicester has cancelled his plans to introduce a workplace parking levy with only one city (Nottingham) in the country having managed to implement such a scheme despite the regulations being in place since 2009. Similarly implementing any kind of congestion charge is equally as difficult as recently exemplified by Cambridge City Council announcing they are no longer pursuing their congestion charging proposals and very few areas outside London having such a scheme. It would be very difficult for Leicestershire County Council to consider introducing demand management measures in its market towns in isolation in such an environment.

4. The Authority's LTP4 is likely to be structured around setting out: firstly, the things that are within its gift to do and influence (subject to funding as appropriate), and the predicted impacts that they will have on future levels of traffic and emissions (most particularly carbon); and secondly, where support and actions are required by other local, regional and national partners to address the impacts of population growth on the County. In that

context, and reflecting the response to question 3 about Leicestershire not being able 'go alone', it is very probable that LTP4 will talk about the need for ways to reduce future levels of traffic through some form of demand management, but in the context of working with regional and national partners to identify a UK-wide approach."

(C) Question by MR MIAH

"The traffic into Loughborough via the A6 Leicester Rd every weekday morning is causing severe delays for motorists and bus users alike. Most weekday mornings traffic is backed up along the A6 and sometimes for several miles, with stationery traffic adding to air pollution. Please can I ask if the County Council is aware of this issue and if so, how it plans to address it?"

Reply by MR O'SHEA

"We are aware of the issues (Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan evidence) and have proposed to work up three transport strategies to look at what can be done in Charnwood to mitigate planned growth (this includes one for the Loughborough and Shepshed area).

The transport strategies focus initially on sustainable modes with highway intervention only after other options have been exhausted; the recently consulted on Loughborough Area Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will form a core element of the Loughborough and Shepshed area strategy. Seeking to improve passenger transport provision will also be a key element. The Authority has recently been successful in receiving Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+) funding which has enabled us to retain services that were planned to be reviewed under the Passenger Transport policy and Strategy. This funding will also allow us to support commercial bus operators to grow patronage post-Covid-19 pandemic through the Enhanced Bus Partnership. In the short-term, we will be reviewing our Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS) approach to ensure it is aligned with the Government aspirations as set out in the national Bus Back Better strategy. Additionally, the Authority is exploring the potential to roll out digital demand responsive services more widely across the County, based on experiences with the current Rural Mobility Fund pilot 'FoxConnect' service currently operating in the south west of the County. The current Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) includes a commitment to develop and implement bus priority interventions as well as undertaking behavioural change campaigns. However, these measures are dependent on the Authority receiving future BSIP+ funding.

Funding for the strategies is reliant on the collection of developer contributions but we will look to explore Government funding such as from Active Travel England, further BSIP+ funding or Major Route Network funding where possible.

Ultimately, the level of traffic using the road network across the country is continually increasing and unless we can get people out of their cars to travel sustainably especially for short journeys, we will see more and more congestion

on our network.”

(D) Question by Mr MULLANEY

“The number 1 and 2 bus services which served Hinckley and Barwell and Earl Shilton were recently removed by Arriva. I have been contacted by a number of residents in Hinckley and Barwell and Earl Shilton who are unhappy with the loss of these services and do not believe the alternative options to the bus service that have been provided are sufficient. Could the County Council please look again at this and work with bus providers to see if an alternative provider could deliver a new 1 and 2 bus service for these communities?”

Reply by MR O’SHEA

“Arriva made the commercial decision to withdraw Services 1 and 2 following a sustained period of low demand.

The County Council considered the withdrawal of these services and any alternative provision in the context of its Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS). The PTPS outlines the need to consider how residents can make journeys to access essential services such as food shopping and primary healthcare that are generally available at a local centre. As part of its assessment, it also needs to consider value for money.

The Council’s impact assessment determined that a majority of residents in Hinckley, Earl Shilton and Barwell continue to have access to an alternative bus service in the form of the Arriva 158 and Stagecoach 148L. Certain residents of Hinckley also have access to the Arriva 7/7a services.

The County Council has no regulatory powers over commercial bus operators, as such all decisions regarding their network are made entirely at the operator’s discretion. For residents over 800 metres walking distance from a stop served by local bus services, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services are in place. The DRT’s offer journeys from Earl Shilton, Hinckley and Barwell, Monday to Saturday to the local centre. There is a significant cost to replace services 1 and 2 and with the majority of residents having access to alternative bus services it would not be cost effective or viable to deliver a new service to meet the travel demands of a small number of households.”

(E) Question by MR PARTON

“I understand that, in light of the significant costs of highways and transport infrastructure provision identified to support Charnwood’s planned growth, the County Council plans to implement an interim transport strategy to manage planning applications in the period before a local plan is in place. I also understand that this approach would mirror the approach to be taken once the plan is adopted. Has the interim plan been implemented and if not, what are the potential consequences?”

Reply by MR O'SHEA

“The Interim Transport Contributions Strategy for Developments in Charnwood District (approved by the Cabinet in February 2023) was produced with the support of Charnwood Borough Council, National Highways and Leicester City Council. When developed, it was envisaged the Strategy would be in place until at least Charnwood’s adoption of its Local Plan and provide the basis for the more detailed transport strategies set out through the proposed main modifications to the Local Plan put forward by Charnwood Borough Council (with the agreement of Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and National Highways).

The Strategy was prepared in response to the ongoing development pressures across Charnwood, with the purpose of providing an evidence base for the Borough Council to seek necessary transport contributions through the development management process towards the Local Plan mitigation package, in advance of an adopted plan and/or associated detailed area transport strategies to be developed in support of this, including setting out the broad approach to implementation of the Strategy. This has become necessary because a number of developments identified within the Local Plan are also coming through the planning process ahead of its adoption.

Subsequent to the approval of the Interim Transport Contributions Strategy on 10 February 2023, and pursuant to the Cabinet resolution, officers have been refining the Strategy and in light of ongoing discussions with Charnwood Borough Council and its implementation through the development management process, officers have been working to implement the Strategy whilst managing associated risks. However, despite previous indications to the contrary, Charnwood Borough Council officers have recently confirmed they do not agree to the proposal although no alternative has been put forward. The application of the Interim Transport Contributions Strategy implementation is therefore currently paused.

It is the position of the County Highway Authority that, given the proposed approach to the distribution of development set out within the proposed Local Plan and the number of developments that have already received planning permission, the Plan, as previously submitted to the examination, requires modification and that the transport strategies are necessary to support sustainable growth in Charnwood. This position remains unchanged, subject to the continued commitment of Charnwood Borough Council. Charnwood Borough Council’s current Local Plan is now nearly seven years old, and the Borough Council is also unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) a local planning authority in such a situation is in a relatively poor position to seek to resist speculative, unplanned sites coming forward through the planning process. Unplanned development can lead to cumulative impacts on infrastructure such as roads and schools that have not been mitigated, in turn having a negative impact on existing residents and communities. The County Council has therefore sought to support Charnwood Borough Council in developing, adopting and implementing

a new local plan to help manage this risk.

However, in-lieu of a firm commitment from Charnwood Borough Council that it will support the County Council's Local Plan approach and the implementation of the Interim Transport Contributions Strategy and its delivery, the County Council will need to reassess its position to support the Local Plan, given the financial risk and lack of a mechanism to mitigate against the negative impacts of development. Without a mechanism to secure contributions through the development management process, the Plan could be adopted underpinned by a transport strategy that is undeliverable."

(F) Question by MR HUNT

- “1. The Prime Minister has announced the Government's intention to delay the move to EV cars and vans by extending the sale of new ICE vehicles to 2035, which of our own Net Zero Leicestershire Transport Actions are likely to be affected by this, and how?
2. In addition to the above, given the changes proposed on insulating rented properties and sale of gas boilers, which Buildings & Energy Actions are likely to be affected, and how?
3. Would he agree that it is important “how” we reach net zero, not just “when” because delay means more severe consequences and overshooting the 1.5°C Paris Agreement?
4. What progress are we making to establish a robust baseline to provide annual progress updates to members. (Net Zero Strategy 3.4)?
5. Will the Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan be reviewed and updated, in accordance with the Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy (3.6)?
6. How will the annual update Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan be published in order to keep pace with new opportunities and changes in government policy and will it supersede the previous Plan?”

Reply by MR PAIN

- “1. The County Council is currently working with consultants to look at producing a roadmap for greening the Council's fleet. At present, it would not be possible to replace all of the fleet vehicles with electric alternatives (the vehicles are not available on the market). It is not clear if the Prime Minister's announcements will impact on the availability of new vehicle types coming onto the market. The County Council is currently exploring the use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as a diesel alternative for those vehicles that are difficult to transition to electric.
2. The County Council has carried out a review of all its properties and the ability to comply with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). It

has a strategy in place to ensure a programme of improvement works to meet the required standards which may include disposal. The County Council will continue to monitor the legislation and make any further improvements in line with any changes to the MEES standards

In relation to the Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan, the County Council will continue to deliver initiatives such as the Green Living Leicestershire Home Upgrade Grants which provide energy efficiency improvements or clean heating (such as air source heat pumps) for homes that do not have mains gas heating.

The Warm Homes service, which is leading the delivery of several Green Living Leicestershire partnership schemes, is continuing to explore future funding opportunities and intends to continue the development of a domestic retrofit advice offer, providing in home advice and community events as well as access to retrofit assessment and recommendations. This will include building links with local building societies to develop resources providing advice and promote green finance initiatives.

The County Council does not anticipate that the recent announcements will impact the ability of the service to support the aims of the Action Plan, noting that new schemes of support, including the recently launched Great British Insulation Scheme and an extension and increase in the funding available per household under the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, were included in the recent announcement.

The removal of the deadline to require private rental properties with minimum EPC band of C by 2035 (proposed changes to MEES regulations) may be a balancing response to housing pressures such as a rise in landlords selling properties to allow more time for improvements. The impact is that landlords will be less likely take steps to act sooner to improve household energy efficiency.

3. Yes, I agree that it is important how we reach net zero – it is the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide released that has an impact rather than just the amount emitted in one specific year.
4. A robust baseline was established and is shown in the Net Zero Strategy (section 3.5). Leicestershire's emissions in the baseline year (2019) were 4.87 MtCO₂e (million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent).
5. Yes, the Net Zero Action Plan will be reviewed and updated in accordance with the Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy.
6. The annual review of the action plan will be presented to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024. All Scrutiny Committee papers are published on the Council's website and, in addition, I expect that the action plan update will be published on the Council's net zero web pages also (where all of the Council's net zero

documents are published).”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5
TO RECEIVE POSITION STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(Note: Standing Order 8 provides as follows: -

- (a) A position statement may give rise to an informal discussion by the Council.
- (b) At the conclusion of the discussion a formal motion may be moved to the effect that a particular issue relevant to the statement be referred to the Cabinet, the Commission, a Board or a Committee for consideration. This shall be moved and seconded formally and put without discussion. No other motion or amendment may be moved.
- (c) The discussion of any position statement shall not exceed 20 minutes but the Chairman may permit an extension to this period.)

LEADER

The Leader will make his statement.

LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Lead Member will make her statement.

LEAD MEMBER FOR HEALTH

The Lead Member will make her statement.

LEAD MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND STAFF RELATIONS

The Lead Member will make her statement.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6
NOTICE OF MOTION

(A) Ivanhoe Line

With the consent of the Council, MR BILL will move and MR MULLANEY will second the following altered motion:

“Bearing in mind the time, money and effort expended by the County Council starting in the early 1980s, the work of the Campaign for re-opening the Ivanhoe Line and the support from the Government’s Restore Your Railway Fund, this Council urges the Department for Transport and Network Rail to reconsider its decision not to restore a passenger service between Leicester and Coalville and Ashby.”

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