



Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE CABINET

DATE: MONDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2010

TIME: 1:00 pm

**PLACE: COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, TOWN HALL
SQUARE, LEICESTER**

Members of the Committee

Councillor Patel (Chair)

Councillor Dempster (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Bhatti, Councillor Dawood, Councillor Naylor, Councillor Osman, Councillor Palmer, Councillor Russell, Councillor Wann and Councillor Westley.

Officer contact: Heather Kent /Julie Harget

Democratic Support

Leicester City Council

Town Hall, Town Hall Square, Leicester LE1 9BG

(Tel. 0116 229 8816/8809 Fax. 0116 229 8819)

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND MEETINGS

You have the right to attend Cabinet to hear decisions being made. You can also attend Committees, as well as meetings of the full Council. Tweeting in formal Council meetings is fine as long as it does not disrupt the meeting. There are procedures for you to ask questions and make representations to Scrutiny Committees, Community Meetings and Council. Please contact Democratic Support as detailed below for further guidance on this.

You also have the right to see copies of agendas and minutes. Agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website at www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk or by contacting us as detailed below.

Dates of meetings are available at the Customer Service Centre, King Street, Town Hall Reception and on the Website.

There are certain occasions when the Council's meetings may need to discuss issues in private session. The reasons for dealing with matters in private session are set down in law.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Meetings are held at the Town Hall. The Meeting rooms are all accessible to wheelchair users. Wheelchair access to the Town Hall is from Horsefair Street (Take the lift to the ground floor and go straight ahead to main reception).

BRAILLE/AUDIO TAPE/TRANSLATION

If there are any particular reports that you would like translating or providing on audio tape, the Democratic Services can organise this for you (production times will depend upon equipment/facility availability).

INDUCTION LOOPS

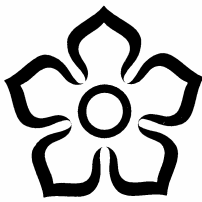
There are induction loop facilities in meeting rooms. Please speak to the Democratic Services Officer at the meeting if you wish to use this facility or contact them as detailed below.

General Enquiries - if you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact Heather Kent or Julie Harget, Democratic Support on (0116) 229 8816/8809 or email Julie.harget@leicester.gov.uk or call in at the Town Hall.

Press Enquiries - please phone the Communications Unit on 252 6081

Supplemental Reports

Any supplemental reports that were made available after the Agenda and Reports were published are included with this document. Please see below for details.



Leicester
City Council

MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Held: THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2010 at 5.30pm

P.R.E.S.E.N.T.

Councillor Grant – Chair
Councillor Bhavsar – Vice-Chair

Councillor Aqbany
Councillor Clair
Councillor Newcombe

Councillor Bajaj
Councillor Newcombe
Councillor Suleman

Also In Attendance

Councillor Wann

Cabinet Member for Culture

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Scuplak.

62. REVIEW OF FAIR DEBT COLLECTION POLICY AND DISCRETIONARY HOUSING POLICY FUNDING REVIEW

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report that updated and simplified the provisions of the Fair Debt Collection Policy and asked the Board to consider a policy in respect of discretionary housing payment.

An Officer from Revenue and Benefits introduced the report and stated that the revised approach had been undertaken following recent government guidelines and would offer a more flexible approach in relation to debt collection.

The report was generally welcomed by the Board. Members heard that the collections covered many payments owed to the City Council including parking fines, Council Tax arrears and rent arrears.

Members heard that the point at which the policy is triggered is when the Council were informed that an individual was experiencing problems in paying their debts.

MINUTE EXTRACT

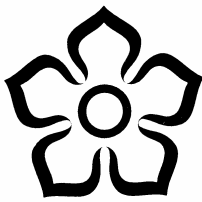
Following a query that related to how the scheme was publicised, the Board were informed that it was intended to increase public awareness of the Fair Debt Policy, and that people who experienced payment problems would be made fully aware of the policy and the expectations from themselves.

A question was asked in relation to the point at which the Council instructed bailiffs to collect debts. Officers stated that prior to instructing a bailiff to visit a property, there would be extensive attempts to make contact with the customer. Customers received reminders of outstanding debts by letter before receiving a court summons. It was further stated that on the first visit, a bailiff would make a visit without bringing a van.

A Member of the Board stated that he was aware of cases where bailiffs were exercising misconduct. The officers present agreed to speak with the Member concerned privately, and reminded the Board that bailiffs should ordinarily make visits to properties in daytime hours. It was also agreed by officers to arrange a meeting with appropriate partners to discuss the general conduct of bailiffs when collecting debts, and that those attending this meeting would include Councillors.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the recommendations contained within it be endorsed.



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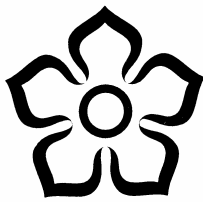
61. UPDATE IN PROCUREMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES

The Director, Safer and Stronger Communities, submitted a report that informed the Board of potential increased investment in Young People's Specialist Substance Misuse Services.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the recommendations contained within it be endorsed.

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Leicester
City Council

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Held: THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2010 at 5.30pm

P.R.E.S.E.N.T.

Councillor Grant– Chair
Councillor Bhavsar – Vice-Chair

Councillor Aqbany
Councillor Clair
Councillor Newcombe

Councillor Bajaj
Councillor Newcombe
Councillor Suleman

Also In Attendance

Councillor Wann

Cabinet Member for Culture

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52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Scuplak.

60. BRAUNSTONE HALL

The Strategic Director, Development, Culture and Regeneration submitted a report that proposed a course of action seeking to use other Council owned land to support the refurbishment of Braunstone Hall.

An officer from Strategic Asset Management introduced the item. He explained that Cabinet would be asked to approve the marketing of approximately 1.54 acres of land at Hinckley Road and Braunstone Hall and would also be recommended to approve the principle of approximately 1.54 acres of land at Hinckley Road to be used as enabling land for the Hall, and that an appropriate level of receipt will be made available towards the Hall's restoration.

Members were generally supportive of the recommendations. It was widely felt that all options for restoring the hall should be considered. Clarity was sought in respect of the financial implications, and in particular, the sums required to be spent to allow the building to become useable. The Legal officer present explained that the sums of 200 and 500 Euros stated in the report were not the amount of subsidy that the Council would provide but related to restricted limits

that local authorities could use for commercial undertakings, and this was directed by the European Union.

The amount of money required to restore the hall was questioned. An approximate figure was not provided but it was stated that a seven figure sum would be required.

In response to a question raised concerning the possible land use of the enabling land, Officers stated that it would likely to be used for employment purposes as the majority of the surrounding land was employment land.

Officers confirmed that they had been working closely for some time with a preferred bidder for the Hall, but that further financial support would be required. Officers were confident that the interest from the preferred bidder would be retained.

The Officer from Strategic Asset Management also confirmed that any money received from the sale of the enabling land would be pledged towards the restoration of Braunstone Hall.

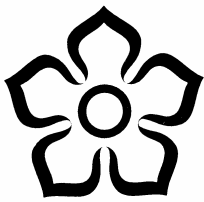
Following a query that related to the history of attempts in restoring the Hall, it was noted that a proposal was put forward three years ago for medical/dental uses, but this did not materialise. The Board were reminded that a preferred bidder for the hall had recently emerged who was working with the City Council.

Concern was raised by Members in respect of paragraph 4.9 of the report which stated that 'If ultimately, no receipt was obtained from the Hinckley Road land, in order not to then call a halt to the process for the Hall, alternative sources of funding would need to be explored'. Members stated that they would have reservations in supporting the redevelopment of the hall if funding was provided from sources other than the enabling land. The Chief Finance Officer reported that it was not clear what money would be available for future capital programmes and that funding for the Hall's restoration did not feature in the current programme. The Board were also informed that a future report would be presented to them that would provide greater detail with regard to the timescales for committing relevant monies.

Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Clair moved that should the marketing of the enabling land fail to result in a suitable solution, that the situation be reviewed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be noted and the recommendations contained within it be endorsed; and
- (2) That the Board asks that the situation in relation to the refurbishment be reviewed should the marketing of the enabling land fail to result in a suitable solution.



Leicester
City Council

MINUTE
EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
PERFORMANCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2010 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Coley – Chair
Councillor Desai – Vice Chair

Councillor Bayford
Councillor Connelly
Councillor Grant

Councillor Chowdhury
Councillor Draycott
Councillor Kitterick

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57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

61. PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER ONE 2010/11

The Chief Executive submitted a report which presented a summary of performance against the priorities set out in *One Leicester* for the first quarter of 2010/11.

In his introduction, the Special Projects Manager outlined the key areas of good performance, those areas at risk and where no data had been received. He also indicated that the Government was planning on undertaking a radical review of the performance framework. He sought Members' views on the kinds of areas which it was felt Leicester's performance should be judged on. He also noted that the forthcoming budget situation would have an effect on performance and expectations.

Some comments were made on the following areas:-

Overall crime levels – in view of the continuing below target performance and forthcoming budget situation, it was felt that a senior city Police Officer should be invited to a future meeting to discuss the situation in the city.

Sickness absence – it was felt that more progress should have been made in this area, particularly through the performance management of staff.

Improvements in this area would be especially important in an era of cuts.

Domestic Violence – concern was expressed at the direction of travel for repeat incidences. Further information was requested to explain the figures.

A number of questions were raised about the shape of future performance reporting, particularly as two indicators in this report could not be compiled due to national surveys being dropped and that the Audit Commission was now being abolished. The Special Projects Manager commented that there was currently a lack of clarity about future performance arrangements, but it was likely that there would be more reporting to the public rather than through audit arrangements. The Local Government Association had been lobbying for self assessment arrangements. It was expected that there would be more choice over future audit arrangements and there would be a reduction in audit fees due to fewer inspections.

It was further commented that if performance information was to be reported to the public, it would need to be in a more accessible format than current committee reports. The Special Projects Manager noted and accepted this point.

A question was asked about whether an internal use of the waste product, FLOC could be created, and whether there were possible options to burn it to create a source of energy. It was commented that commercial uses of FLOC were restricted to where there was an existing burning process already going on, generally using fossil fuels. The Chief Finance Officer undertook to seek a detailed response to the member concerned.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a senior city Police Officer be invited to a future meeting to discuss concerns about crime levels and future risks if the numbers of Police were reduced; and
- (2) That Cabinet be recommended to maintain a continuing strong focus on reducing sickness absence.