



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2010 at 1.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Patel - Chair
Councillor Dempster - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti
Councillor Naylor
Councillor Palmer
Councillor Wann

Councillor Dawood
Councillor Osman
Councillor Russell
Councillor Westley

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Coley

Liberal Democrat Group Leader

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81. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence,

82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda and/or declare if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

Councillor Westley declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Item 7, Review of Fair Debt Collection Policy and Discretionary Housing Policy Funding Review as some of his family members were Council house tenants.

83. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPLICATION BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE FOR ORDER UNDER
SECTION 13 OF THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT 1986

The Leader announced that in response to the decision at the Special Meeting of the Cabinet to request the Secretary of State to ban a proposed march on 9 October, the Secretary of State had agreed to ban the march. The Leader

explained however that there were no legal powers to stop a static assembly.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ATTENDANCE AT THE METROPOLIS CONFERENCE AT THE EUROPEAN COURTS OF JUSTICE AT THE HAGUE

The Leader announced that the Chief Executive would be speaking on Community Cohesion and Cities on Tuesday 5 October at the 15th Metropolis Conference at the European Courts of Justice in the Hague. Members heard that this was a prestigious event and Leicester was the only UK city to have been invited to speak at the conference. The Leader added that it was good to see that the City's work on community cohesion continued to be recognised internationally.

84. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 6 September 2010 and the Special Meeting of Cabinet held on 24 September, be confirmed as correct records.

85. MATTERS REFERRED FROM COMMITTEES

Performance and Value for Money Select Committee – 1 September 2010:
Support Services Transformation Programme

Councillor Dawood responded to the recommendations from the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) notes the report and comments made by Members of the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee, and
- 2) agrees that work being done on alternative Human Resource options such as the ability of employees to buy holidays and shorter working weeks as a way of mitigating against the extra job losses that will be incurred, in conjunction with other work being carried out, be brought forward.

86. GILROES CREMATORIUM - CREMATOR REPLACEMENT AND ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Councillor Wann submitted a report that set out the options to enable legislative compliance and to improve the crematorium facilities. Members heard that a Task Group had met to discuss the proposals and consultations had been carried out with organisations, who were mostly very happy with the proposals.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) approves the replacement cremators and installation of mercury abatement equipment together with an extension to the East Chapel to increase seating capacity and an increase in car parking provision at a total cost of £3.94m;
- 2) approves that the above works be self-financing and that expenditure is funded through prudential borrowing of £3.94m, paid back by means of a £113 charge applied to cremations from 1 November 2010; and
- 3) approves the use of the Lodge annexe as a shop for the sale of flowers and wreaths and the conversion of redundant space within the crematorium to an office for Bereavement Services staff and visitors at a total cost of approximately £168k, funded through prudential borrowing, paid back from income arising from this and from management and other operational savings resulting from the relocation of staff into this accommodation.

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

Councillor Osman submitted a report that updated and simplified the provisions of the Fair Debt Collection Policy and approved a policy in respect of discretionary housing payment.

Members heard that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had considered the report and supported its recommendations.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) approves the updated Fair Debt Collection Policy as detailed in the appendix attached to the report; and
- 2) confirms the current policy for discretionary Housing Payments, including treating the 'lower limit' as the discretionary housing payment budget.

88. MANOR HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report that outlined options for the future use of the Manor House Community Centre following its temporary closure in November 2009.

Councillor Bhatti explained that an extensive consultation exercise had been carried out which demonstrated that the majority of those consulted wanted the Manor House to be re-opened as a community facility. Councillor Bhatti added that there was an amendment to 4.17 of the report to show that the school

playing fields were not part of the discussions into the possible options as they were controlled by decisions around green spaces for local communities for children and would require consent from the Secretary of State for Education. Members were also asked to note that this was the only vehicular access for St Mary's School.

Councillor Bhatti asked for Cabinet to agree to Option 3, that Manor House should be re-opened as detailed in section 4.19 in the report. Members heard that in respect of this option, a one off investment of £50,000 would be required and this could be accounted for from the £50,000 that was returned to the corporate budget from the 10,000 trees programme. Councillor Russell stated that she supported Option 3, to re-open Manor House but requested the following amendments:

- that during October and November, whilst Manor House was undergoing a deep clean, that Officers should take the opportunity to talk to community groups and discuss ways that they could work together to ensure Manor House became a sustainable community facility.
- that factors should be agreed as to what constituted success and how it could be measured.
- that during December, the centre should be actively publicised before a full re-opening in January.

Councillor Bhatti added an additional recommendation that Officers should be asked to assess the take-up to events at the centre during the 6 – 9 months following the re-opening with a view to looking towards providing facilities on a permanent basis.

Members stated that they supported the re-opening of the centre and heard that there was a potential interest from a community group in becoming a key tenant.

Councillor Coley also stated that he welcomed the recommendations and commented that in 2007, funds had been allocated to refurbish the Manor House although this had not happened.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) notes the contents of the report,
- 2) notes the consultation process and outcomes with community group leaders and local residents and Ward Councillors: and
- 3) agrees to Option 3 to re-open the building, as detailed in 4.19 of the report; and
- 4) agrees to the additional recommendations:

- a) that during October and November, Officers should talk to community groups to find ways of working together to encourage engagement and ensure that Manor House becomes a sustainable facility;
- b) that factors for constituting success and how it can be measured be agreed;
- c) that the centre be actively publicised during December before a full re-opening in January; and
- d) that Officers look into the possibility of providing community facilities in the area on a permanent basis in the future.

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

Councillor Naylor submitted a report that informed Cabinet of potential increased investment in Young People's Specialist Substance Misuse Services and which sought Cabinet's approval to tender the contract at a significantly increased level and duration that was originally outlined in the 2009/10 procurement plan.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet agrees to the procurement of Specialist Drug and Alcohol Services for Young People at the increased level and duration.

90. BRAUNSTONE HALL

Councillor Patel submitted a report which explained that Braunstone Hall was a grade 2 listed building, in need of restoration and a sustainable future and a course of action was proposed which sought to use other Council owned land to support its refurbishment.

Councillor Patel referred to the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for the situation in relation to the refurbishment to be reviewed should the marketing of the enabling land fail to result in a suitable solution, and stated that Cabinet agreed with that approach.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) approves the simultaneous marketing of approximately 1.54 acres at Hinckley Road and Braunstone Hall,
- 2) approves the principle of approximately 1.54 acres of land at

Hinckley Road being used as enabling land for the Hall, and that an appropriate level of receipt, to be agreed will be available towards the restoration of Braunstone Hall; and

- 3) agrees that the situation in relation to the refurbishment be reviewed should the marketing of the enabling land fail to result in a suitable solution.

91. PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER ONE 2010/2011

Councillor Patel submitted a report that presented a summary of performance against the priorities set out in *One Leicester* for the first quarter of 2010/11.

Members heard that the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee had considered the report and recommended that Cabinet maintained a continuing strong focus on reducing sickness absence. Members heard that the Council was making progress in improving sickness absence levels, which were continuing to reduce. Statistics of sickness absence indicated that the Council was on track to meet its agreed target for 2010/11.

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet:

- 1) notes the performance for the first quarter of 2010/11;
- 2) asks that for those targets deemed to be at risk, that the relevant strategic directors work with their Priority Boards to develop responses and ensure Cabinet Leads are briefed accordingly; and
- 3) notes the implications for future performance reporting and management in the light of the coalition government's policy statements and emergency budget as set out in section 4 of the report.

92. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 1.28 pm.