



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2004 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor R. Blackmore - Chair
Councillor Johnson - Vice-Chair

Councillor Coley
Councillor Metcalfe

Councillor Mugglestone
Councillor Scuplak

Councillor Suleman

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71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

There were no declarations of interest.

72. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leicester Riders

Councillor Blackmore announced that the Leicester Riders were now back in the City, and had begun training at the John Stanford Sports Centre in preparation for their first match at the weekend.

Cabinet Link for Social Care and Health

Councillor Blackmore announced that Councillor Gill had now resigned as Cabinet Link Member for Social Care and Health, and thanked him for the work that he had done in this role.

73. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2004 having been circulated to members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

74. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee (Social Care Stream) – 1 September 2004

Revenue Outturn 2003/04

The Committee resolved the following at the above meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the committee:

- (1) Notes the final outturn for the Social Care and Health Department budget for the 2003/2004 financial year; and
- (2) Congratulates the department on its achievement in ensuring that the budget has been brought in within the cash limit; and
- (3) Asks that its concern that the Councils overall budget for 2003/04 was under spent be brought to the attention of the Cabinet, given the financial pressures on the Social Care and Health Department.
- (4) Asks that the Committee's concerns over the transport budget are brought to the Cabinet's attention, given that the Departments costs are not fully funded

Councillor Blackmore in response stated that spending exactly what was in the budget was impossible, but that the underspend had been partly, but not wholly predicted before the budget was set. In February it was expected to have reserves of £3.9 million, which were to be increased to £5 million, by-

- transferring £0.3 million from the Housing Department
- contributing £0.3 million from the 2004/05 budget
- contributing £0.3 million from each of the 2005/06 and 2006/07 budgets

It was noted that final reserves were actually £4.6 million. The consequence being that contributions in 2005/06 and 2006/07 were no longer required.

Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee – 14 September 2004

Lifelong Learning and Community Development Premises Review Update

The Committee resolved the following at the above meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Cabinet be asked to stop the Premises review and divisional organisational review with immediate effect and to reinstate those made redundant;
2. That a report be brought back to the meeting on 7 October outlining the impact of the reviews on staff and service users;
3. That the whole issue of the premises and organisational reviews be considered together.

Councillor Suleman in response stated that in relation to the organisational review there had been widespread consultation with staff and Unions in the first six months and there had been significant changes to the proposals as a result of this feedback, and that elected members had also expressed concerns about different aspects of the proposals which had also been fed back to the Corporate and Service Director.

As a result of the feedback there had been important changes to the community services elements of the proposals and confirmation of the roles of area managers working with local members and area committees. It was also reported that a number of staff had been moved to new locations across the City and the vast majority of staff were happy with their new locations but in accordance with Human Resources practice across the Council managers in the division had been asked to follow up any concerns which individual staff had raised.

Advice had also been given to the Corporate Director about the need to have appropriate consultation and engagement processes at both local and city wide levels, and a working group to develop a Lifelong Learning Forum for the new services would be set up.

In relation to the Premises Review it was reported that this had arisen from the Council's budget strategy, and over the next three years there would be a reduction in Council funding to support community facilities. The consultation carried out would be focused on ways in which facilities could be kept open to the community whilst also meeting the Council's revenue strategy.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Cabinet note the Corporate Director's comments regarding the referral of the premises review report,
- (2) that the Cabinet confirm the implementation of the Divisional Organisation Review under powers delegated to the Corporate Director and
- (3) that the Cabinet confirm the process set out in the progress report on the premises review as the strategy for developing proposals for consideration by Cabinet.

75. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2003/04

Councillor Coley submitted a report enabling compliance with the requirements of the Council's Corporate Governance Code by carrying out an Annual Review of Corporate Governance for the year 2003/04.

The relevant minute extract from the Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee on 16 September 2004 had been circulated, which recommended that the consultation strategy be reviewed in light of the recent judicial review. Councillor Coley responded that this was already happening.

RESOLVED:

That the Service Director (Legal Services) be authorised to finalise a form of Corporate Assurance Statement to be signed by the Council's Leader and Chief Executive, and to be published on the Council's website.

76. CENTRAL MAINTENANCE FUND AUTHORISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report seeking authorisation for the release of capital monies to the Central Maintenance Fund for health and safety works as identified in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the release of the allocated funds of £300,000 within the Capital programme, to the Central Maintenance Fund, for the implementation of work detailed in the report, be approved.

77. THE AALBORG COMMITMENTS - A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL SERVICES

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report asking the Cabinet to endorse the signing of the Aalborg commitments by the Leicester Partnership. It was noted that the Commitments would provide a useful framework within which to develop the Leicester Partnership's new Community Strategy, and to deliver key sustainability outcomes in the Council's Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Leicester Partnership's signing of the Aalborg commitments be endorsed, and
- (2) that to demonstrate the Council's support for commitment no.10 regarding sustainable development and climate protection, we would expect to embrace item 5 (inter city sharing) of commitment 10 by exchange of information and

good practice by electronic means wherever possible, thereby avoiding travelling overseas or within the UK.

78. SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2005/06 AND BEYOND

Councillor Suleman submitted a report recommending term dates for 2005/06 and a strategy for determining dates for 2006/07 and 2007/08. It was reported that these proposed dates mirrored those of the County.

The minute extract from the Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 14 September 2004 had been circulated.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the term dates for 2005/06 as detailed in appendix a be supported,
- (2) that the views of the School Terms and Holiday Dates Working Party, Scrutiny Committee and stakeholder groups be noted. and
- (3) that the Cabinet receive further recommendations from the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning with respect to 2006/07 and 2007/08 upon completion of further research, consultation and reflection by the Working Group and Corporate Director on this matter.

79. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2004/05: CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE INITIATIVES AND RIVERSIDE BUDGETS

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report seeking approval to schemes under the Capital Programme 2004/05. It was noted that Riverside Festival had been held over 2 days this year and had proved to be a great success, attracting twice as many boats as the previous year and that the riverside was an area which should be promoted.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the schemes set out in the supporting information be approved; and
- (2) that approval be given for funding from the Capital Programme for these schemes from the Conservation and Heritage Initiatives and Riverside budgets.

80. BASE BUDGET PREPARATION

Councillor Coley submitted a report explaining the process by which the Council's 2005/06 base budget was being prepared, and summarised the

principles supporting this process.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the framework for base budget preparation be endorsed and;
- (2) that the cash limits for each department be approved.

81. CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2005/06 TO 2007/08

Councillor Coley submitted a report seeking Cabinet approval of the Council's Capital Strategy 2005/2008. The relevant minute extract from the Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee on 16 September 2004 had been circulated.

It was noted that the Council's current 3 year capital strategy ran up to 2004/2005, and the capital programme for 2004/05, which was derived from the existing strategy was the final year of that 3 year programme, subsequent programmes would be based on the new capital strategy which would run from April 2005 to March 2008.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Cabinet endorse the capital strategy, as a draft consultation with key parties, subject to-
 - deletion of provisions whereby housing capital receipts can be retained for corporate purposes;
 - insertion of a provision requiring a predetermined level of housing resources to be treated as corporate each year.
- (2) that the Cabinet request that the Chief Finance Officer makes amendments to give effect to the above, and submit the strategy for Council approval in November, together with the comments of the consultees.

82. EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF PROCURMENT

Councillor Coley submitted a report presenting work done to date, and consequent recommendations of the efficiency review.

It was noted that the review of procurement was one of three efficiency reviews set up as a consequence of the 2004/05 budget, which together aimed to make savings of £3.5m per annum by 2006/07.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet note the progress of the efficiency reviews so

far,

- (2) endorse the continued mandatory requirement to use ESPO (except for recognised exceptions) and the proposed actions for ensuring this is enforced; and in particular to seek a routine report to members of the Cabinet (Efficiency Review) Sub Group on future non use of ESPO after a period of grace,
- (3) note the findings of the review of IT procurement, and to endorse its recommendations, in particular to delegate to the Town Clerk (in consultation with the lead member for the review) authority to conclude a sole supplier agreement for the future provision of PCs and to determine the scope of services provided within the agreement,
- (4) to note the findings of the review of stationary and paper, and endorse its recommendations,
- (5) to note the findings of the review of vehicle and plant procurement, and endorse its recommendations,
- (6) to approve a policy of reducing inflation allowances in future budgets where departments have been purchasing from non approved suppliers, and delegate to the Chief Finance Officer authority to devise a specific scheme, and
- (7) to seek a report back from the Chief Finance Officer on the translation of savings from all three efficiency reviews into budget savings.

83. WIDE AREA DATA NETWORK MODERNISATION

Councillor Coley submitted a report seeking approval to upgrade the existing Wide Area Data Network to give a 5 fold increase in performance and at the same time reduce revenue costs for line rentals. The Cabinet noted that the upgrade would also incorporate a redesign of the network to provide greater resilience.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That an investment of £600,000 to improve the speed of wide area network, increase resilience and reduce revenue costs to be funded by Prudential borrowing under the 'Spend to Save' rules be approved; and
- (2) that the Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee be informed that 'Spend to Save' had been used in this way.

84. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2004/05 - PERIOD 4

Councillor Coley submitted a report showing a summary position comparing spending with the budget for all General Fund Services. The report was the first in the regular cycle of reports for the 2004/2005 financial year showing budget issues which had surfaced so far.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the changes made to the original approved budget for 2004/05 as approved by the Cabinet on 21 June 2004 be noted,
- (2) that the expenditure to date and the budgetary issues which have emerged this year so far be noted, and
- (3) that the proposals put forward to ensure that spending is contained within the Departments budgets be noted.

85. DEVELOPING OPTIONS FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF HIGHFIELDS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Suleman presented a report seeking approval for the establishment of a Partnership Board to oversee the development of a strategic plan and development of recommendations regarding the engagement of the community in the governance of Highfields Youth and Community Centre.

The Cabinet noted that the Highfield Youth and Community Centre was an important part of the Council's services in Highfields, and that in partnership with the Highfields Community Association £5million of Council and external funding had been secured to create a state of the art facility in one of City's most disadvantaged communities.

It was also noted that a new Partnership Board was being set up to consider proposals for the community governance of the centre, and that the proposed membership was detailed in the report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Corporate Director be requested to set up a Partnership Board to oversee the next stage of development of the Highfields Youth and Community Centre,
- (2) that the Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Link member for Education and Lifelong Learning, to finalise membership of the Partnership Board, and
- (3) that the Corporate Director be requested to bring a report

back to Cabinet setting out recommendations from the Partnership Board for the future direction of the Centre.

86. PRIVATE SESSION

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following report in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, because it involves the likely disclosure of 'exempt' information, as defined in the Paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Paragraph 9

- Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

UPPERTON ROAD VIADUCT – PURCHASE OF LAND IN ADVANCE OF SCHEME

87. UPPERTON ROAD VIADUCT - PURCHASE OF LAND IN ADVANCE OF SCHEME

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report seeking Cabinet approval to acquire property interests required for the Upperton Road Viaduct Scheme in advance of making a Compulsory Purchase Order, and to undertake any prudential borrowing which may be required to finance these acquisitions.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Link Members for Finance, and Regeneration, Planning and Property and the Chief Finance Officer (in respect of prudential borrowing only) to agree terms for the acquisition of land or rights required for the successful implementation of the Scheme and to undertake prudential borrowing up to a maximum of £2.88 million to finance these acquisitions,
- (2) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to prepare and execute all the necessary documentation required to purchase the land and rights required by the scheme, and
- (3) that implementation of the scheme only begin after consultation with all members of the Cabinet on means to minimise traffic disruption.

88. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.10 pm.

