



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2004 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

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

Councillor Coley
Councillor Gill

Councillor Mugglestone
Councillor Ramsdale

Councillor Metcalfe

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89. 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.

Councillor Blackmore declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Report D, 'Proposals for the Relocation of Gateway College to Rushey Mead Secondary School / Soar Valley College Campus' as his wife was an employee of De Montfort University. He left the meeting for discussion of this item.

90. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bede Island North

Councillor Blackmore noted that the work which had taken place over the past few years on Bede Island North had won a regeneration award from the East Midlands Property Forum.

New Walk Improvements

Councillor Blackmore noted that a Federation of Builders Special Environmental Restoration Award had been received for the work undertaken on New Walk.

Knighton Park

Councillor Blackmore noted that Knighton Park had been voted, by readers of the Sun newspaper, the best park in the Midlands. Councillor Blackmore paid

tribute to the work of all involved in the park in making it a success, including the Friends of Knighton Park.

91. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27 September 2004 having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

92. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee – 16 September 2004

The Committee resolved the following at the above meeting:-

- *that the Committee felt the views expressed previously about a crisis in the Council's finances had been exaggerated, leading to greater cuts than were necessary, and*
- *that the Committee request that the Cabinet take note of their view in light of future budget discussions.*

Councillor Coley commented that the administration had not exaggerated the financial position facing the Council. He stated that the underspend was largely as a result of interest on high levels of cash balances. He stated that this underspend would improve the Council's reserves position and the 2005/6 requirement for savings to fund increased reserves would no longer be required.

Councillor Coley therefore would be noting the Committee's view for the future budget round, but he stated that the previous budget was made on the best information that was available at the time.

93. GRANT AID PROJECTS AUDITED ACCOUNTS

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report setting out the requirements placed on projects to supply the Council with a copy of their audited accounts. The report also further identified those projects which had failed to supply such accounts by the initial deadline and recommended appropriate action.

The Assistant Chief Executive, to avoid confusion, pointed out that the Council funded the Multiple Sclerosis Society - Respite Care Scheme, not the Leicestershire branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Cabinet confirm monthly funding arrangements be put in place for grant aided projects still receiving Council funding that did not forward their accounts by the initial deadline;

- (2) that Officers be requested to bring a report to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity recommending the appropriate action in response to those Grant Aided Projects whose accounts are still outstanding by the final deadline of 31 December 2004.

94. NEWARKE HOUSES LOTTERY FUNDED PROJECT

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report seeking authority to commence the Newarke Houses project, at a total cost of £1,520,000, in accordance with project management standards for major projects.

Officers reported that the fundraising efforts to find the additional funding to match the lottery funding were going very well.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the commencement of the Newarke Houses project, be authorised, with total costs of £1,510,000 made up as shown in table 1 of the report, in accordance with the Council's project management standards for major projects,
- (2) that the action of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, be noted, in authorising an exception to contract procedure rules, with regard to the appointment of Focus consultants (UK) Ltd in accordance with contract procedure rule 4.1k.

COUNCILLOR JOHNSON IN THE CHAIR FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEM

95. PROPOSALS FOR THE RELOCATION OF GATEWAY COLLEGE TO THE RUSHEY MEAD SECONDARY SCHOOL/SOAR VALLEY COLLEGE CAMPUS

Councillor Johnson submitted a report outlining the proposal to relocate Gateway College from its current city centre site to a new purpose built campus on the Rushey Mead School Playing Fields. The relocation fitted in to the wider secondary transformation agenda, including Building Schools for the Future and would be part of a wider set of linked regeneration proposals being developed by the Council's partners.

The relevant minute extract from the Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee held on 7 October 2004 was circulated to the Cabinet. Councillor Johnson noted that the Committee endorsed the proposal on education grounds.

Councillor Johnson noted that there were local concerns about the scheme which he felt could be overcome by further consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to note that any Cabinet decision is not a material consideration for the Development Control Committee and the report would play no part in determination of the planning application;
- (2) that the Cabinet is supportive of the educational merits of the scheme;
- (3) that further consultation take place on the scheme before any final decision is taken.

COUNCILLOR BLACKMORE IN THE CHAIR

96. 2004/05 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - PERIOD 4

Councillor Coley submitted a report updating the Cabinet on the progress of the capital programme for 2004/05 up to the end of July (period 4).

RESOLVED:

- (1) that a revised level of programmed expenditure of £96.5 million, be approved;
- (2) that the level of expenditure to the end of July 2004 of £19.2 million, be noted;
- (3) that the position relating to capital receipts, be noted;
- (4) that Cabinet approve the following additions to the Social Care and Health programme;
 - Information Management (£166,000)
 - The Integrated Children's System (£80,000)
- (5) that an increase in the gross cost of the Victoria Road East/Lewisham Road Link scheme of £720,000 to £8.1m and an increase in the City Council's contribution of £300,000 to £3.17m, be approved with the increased contribution being met from part of the savings realised from the provision for the Abbey Meadows Depot relocation scheme;
- (6) that an increase in the cost of the Town Hall Improvements/Register Office relocation scheme of £134,000 to £1.932m, be approved;
- (7) that the ringfencing of £500,000 from the anticipated increased capital receipt from the Pocklington's Walk site, towards the relocation of the Registration Service scheme, be approved;

- (8) that the reallocation of the £46,000 form RAD department reserve set aside for the sound system for the Town Hall Improvements/Register Office relocation scheme, be approved;
- (9) to note that the forecast capital programme performance is 96% of the approved programme compared to a target of 90%,
- (10) that the actual prudential indicators for 2003/04 and the latest forecasts for 2004/05, be noted;
- (11) that the Spend to Save funding for the Multi Disciplinary Centre of £575,000, be noted and
- (12) that prudential borrowing of £112,955 be approved to meet costs relating to a combined heat and power unit at Braunstone Leisure Centre.

97. ICT/E MODERNISING LEICESTER STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Councillor Coley submitted a report presenting the corporate ICT/ E Modernising Leicester Strategic Framework. The ICT / E Modernising Leicester Strategic Framework described how the Council would meet its stated aim which is; 'To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan through the efficient and effective use of ICT'.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the corporate ICT/E modernising Leicester Strategic Framework, be endorsed, and
- (2) that a summary of the Departmental ICT and e-modernising strategies and the Customer Access Strategy be reported to Cabinet.

98. EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF PROPERTY (CENTRALLY LOCATED ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDINGS)

Councillor Coley submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the progress of the review currently being undertaken of Centrally Located Administrative Buildings (CLABS), this review being part of the wider property efficiency review.

Members of the Cabinet expressed concerns over the level of maintenance which had taken place on CLABS over previous years.

Councillor Vincent noted particular issues with regard to the IT infrastructure at Greyfriars which he felt needed to be upgraded.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that option 5 in the report be further developed as the framework for the accommodation needs of the City Council;
- (2) that the principles with regard to the occupation of CLABS, be agreed;
- (3) to note that a capital bid will be required to meet the capital expenditure arising from the review;
- (4) that the significant financial implications arising from this report be noted and that a further report will be brought back to Cabinet when the outcome of the structural investigations is available and the estimated costs reviewed in the light of this investigation;
- (5) that the City Council takes a lease of the major part of the Alternative Accommodation for a period of up to 15 years, subject to obtaining the accommodation on other terms recommended for approval and that the net additional revenue cost be recognised as a corporate budget pressure which will have to be taken into account when setting the 05/06 budget;
- (6) that the Corporate Director, Resources, Access and Diversity, in consultation with the Cabinet Link Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property be authorised to enter into the lease of the proposed Alternative Accommodation, on the terms and in respect of the area agreed in the negotiations;
- (7) that savings on interest payable in the revenue budget as a result of revised schedule of spend of the £10m investment in property maintenance of £136,000 in 04/05, £104,000 in 05/06 and £144,000 in 06/07 be earmarked towards the cost of taking the lease of the Alternative Accommodation,
- (8) that the lease of Welford House not be renewed on its expiry in 2008;
- (9) that the Corporate Director, Resources, Access and Diversity, in consultation with the Cabinet Link members for Finance and Regeneration, Planning and Property, be authorised to obtain tenders for other necessary works at the Alternative Accommodation or any other of the CLABS required for the implementation of the review and accept the lowest tender, or that which gives best value if not the lowest tender, and

- (10) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into the proposed lease and the various works contracts arising from the lease of the Alternative Accommodation, and any other works contracts necessary to implement the review.

99. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Councillor Coley submitted a report concerning the Annual Corporate Governance Report for 2003/04 which was discussed at Council on 30 September 2004, in particular in relation to the Council's Consultation Strategy and Toolkit in light of the recent Judicial review.

Councillor Blackmore noted that a commitment was made at the full Council meeting to give consideration to the Council's consultation strategy in light of the judgement made at the recent judicial review. He stated that officers were of the opinion that no change should be made to the Council's consultation strategy. The judgement related to the Council's relationship with 6 individual organisations and didn't bring the whole strategy in to question. He also stated that work was currently being prepared on developing a compact with the voluntary sector which defined the relationship between the Council and those organisations.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the views of Officers following a review of the Council's Consultation Strategy/Toolkit following the recent judicial review judgement, be noted;
- (2) that the Consultation Strategy/Toolkit not be revised in light of the judgement;
- (3) to note that contractual arrangements will be reviewed as part of the development work relating to the purchase of service agreements with the voluntary and community sector; and
- (4) that the Leader and Chief Executive be authorised to sign off the Corporate Governance Annual Report for 2003/04.

100. PROGRESS REPORT - DEVELOPING EXTRA CARE HOUSING

Councillor Vincent submitted a report outlining progress made on Extra Care Housing Developments which was originally considered by the Cabinet on 16 August 2004.

Members of the Cabinet enquired about the level of affordable housing that would be included as part of the development of Extra Care Housing. Officers stated that of the 6 acre site, 2 of those acres would be affordable which met the Council's policy of 30% affordable housing provision.

RESOLVED:

that the Cabinet confirms their agreement to the disposal of the affordable housing element on the Wycombe Road site to Hanover Housing Association for an Extra Care Housing Scheme, on terms to be agreed by the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity in accordance with the Council's Disposal Framework (as agreed by Cabinet in October 2003).

101. 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.

EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF PROPERTY (AREA REVIEW)

102. EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF PROPERTY (AREA REVIEW)

Councillor Coley submitted a report which outlined the approach that was being adopted for a city wide Property Efficiency Review that would lead to a more strategic approach to the Capital Programme and Asset Management to support improved service delivery and greater efficiency.

RESOLVED:

that the recommendations as detailed in the report, be approved.

The full decision is recorded in the private section of the Minutes as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 and Paragraph 12 of Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1990, that is, 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 and, any advice received, information obtained or actions to be taken in connection with any legal proceedings by or against the authority or the determination of any matter affecting the authority.

103. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.58.

