



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2004 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair
Councillor Draycott - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti
Councillor Corral
Councillor Waddington
Councillor Getliffe
Councillor Kitterick

* * * * *

132. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were requested 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.

No declarations were made.

133. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader thanked all staff for maintaining the Councils 'good' rating under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

The Leader also announced that he had travelled to London to meet Rafael Vinoly, the architect of the Performing Arts Centre, would be recommending that the Cabinet approve a design which he believed the City and region as a whole could be proud of.

The Leader also stated that the Cabinet intended to do two things to improve and modernise the Council's relationship with the voluntary sector:-

- a) try and settle the past by dealing with outstanding issues at the Cabinet meeting in January 2005,
- b) the Council intended to review the future relationship between the Council, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector. A study would be commissioned into what the ideal relationship should be in a

modern and multi cultural City and this could then be used to launch a Commission (with an independent Chair) to see how the situation could be moved forward.

The Leader also announced that he had visited the new Braunstone Leisure Centre and had been very impressed with the facilities on offer. It was noted that this was a facility for the whole city to use, and that user figures had so far exceeded predicted levels.

134. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2004, having been circulated to Members be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

135. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred.

136. INVESTMENT IN REGENERATION AND CULTURE AND REMOVAL OF CHARGES AT THE GUILDHALL AND FOR PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Councillor Draycott submitted a report seeking Cabinet's approval to progress the programme of investment in cultural services and informed Members of Cabinet of the required procedures, along with financial and legal implications, to implement the Leader's Announcements made at Cabinet on 29 November 2004.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That charges for the use of public conveniences at all Leicester City Council owned and run facilities be abolished from Tuesday 21 December 2004,
- (2) that the entrance charges for the Guildhall be abolished from Tuesday 21 December 2004,
- (3) that the Cabinet support the programme of disposals and investment in cultural services agreed to in principle by Cabinet on 15 March 2004 and 5 April 2004 and agree the following specific provisions:
 - (a) that Officers continue to progress the disposal of the assets identified at the Cabinet meeting of 15 March 2004 and that the proceeds be used for investment in Cultural Services and additionally, agree that authority to agree terms, enter contracts for sale, vary the assets disposed of to maximise the benefit to the Council be

delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources, in liaison with the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture and in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Members for Finance and Leisure,

- (b) approve an addition to the capital programme of £4.035m as described at Cabinet on 15 March 2004, this addition to be funded from ring fenced receipts and revenue contributions by the Regeneration and Culture Department,
 - (c) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, can commit expenditure subject to reasonable assurance of the availability of sale proceeds (with any shortfall falling to the Cultural Services Department's revenue account),
 - (d) to note that, in accordance with the 'Spend to Save' rules, 7.5% will be charged to the department on any unfinanced expenditure prior to achievement of receipts,
 - (e) to note that should any receipts from the disposal of the assets agreed in principle by the Cabinet on 15 March and 4 April 2004 exceed or fall short of the investment identified, a further report will be brought to Cabinet with options for the use of those receipts.
- (4) that the Council retain ownership of the Humberstone Park Café, protecting the interests of the existing tenant for the duration of their current lease,
 - (5) that an additional £50,000 grant to the Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC) in the current financial year be approved, and provide a continuing uplift in grant to the LRC from 2005/06, provided the grant is matched by East Midlands Development Agency and English Partnerships and justified by the LRC's performance against their business plan,
 - (6) that, subject to budgetary provision being available in 2005/06, the Community (recreational) Transport scheme be reintroduced for groups and lunch clubs serving elderly and disabled residents, and delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member to allow officers to start work and take decisions on this service reinstatement so that the new service can be operational within six months,

- (7) that, subject to budgetary provision being made available in 2005/06, pre 9.30am concessionary fares for the elderly from 1 April 2005 be reintroduced, and
- (8) that Cabinet agree to increase the budget of Regeneration and Culture in the current year by £80,000 to meet the part year effect of the above, utilising savings from current budgets.

137. OFFICE CORE - (NEW BUSINESS QUARTER) AREA STRATEGY GUIDANCE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Councillor Willmott submitted a report covering the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Plan for the Office Core (or New Business Quarter) area of the City Centre. The minute extract from the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 20 October and 15 December 2004 had been circulated and the comments of the Committee taken on board.

RESOLVED:

That the Office Core Area Strategy Guidance be adopted as supplementary planning guidance, to the City of Leicester Local Plan, subject to the amendments set out in Section 3 of the main report.

138. LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND STRUCTURE PLAN

Councillor Willmott submitted a report allowing Cabinet to consider the next steps in the adoption of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Structure Plan.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommend that the Council:

- (1) agree the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan, comprising the Written Statement and key diagram attached as appendix 1, and
- (2) authorise the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture to carry out any further necessary steps including: publishing a Statement of Decisions and Reasons on Objections to the Further Proposed Modification, and a revised technical paper on housing, giving notice of the Council's intention to adopt the Structure Plan, agreeing the date of adoption and undertaking all actions necessary to give effect to the adoption of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan and the subsequent

publication of an Explanatory Memorandum.

139. POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON THE HIGHWAY: POLICY

Councillor Draycott submitted a report detailing a new policy to be adopted relating to political stands and campaigning on the highway.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet accept the proposed policy relating to political stands and campaigning on the highway.

140. COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION OF LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION SERVICE AND THE ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Councillor Getliffe submitted a report introducing to Cabinet the outcome of the National Care Standards Commission Inspection of the Leicester City Adoption Service, which took place in October 2003. It was noted that it was a requirement that the Cabinet considered this formally. Associated with the Inspection was the Adoption Service Statement of Purpose, contained within the Adoption team Annual Report. Councillor Getliffe commended staff in the Adoption Service and the members of the Adoption Panel.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet note the final report of the Commission for Social Care Inspection into the Leicester City Adoption Service, and
- (2) that Cabinet acknowledge the statutory requirements and good practice recommendations contained within the confidential part of the CSGI inspection report, together with the departmental responses and action plan.

141. 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.

LEICESTER MERCURY NEWSPAPER PROPOSALS

142. LEICESTER MERCURY NEWSPAPER PROPOSALS

Councillor Willmott submitted a report recommending the disposal of land to the Leicester Mercury Newspaper to facilitate their proposals for a major refurbishment scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Cabinet agree that the freehold of the area of land marked A in the plan attached to the report is sold to the Mercury for the sum of £5,000 plus VAT, this being a sum of £2,500 below market value,
- (2) that the disposal of area A and the other transactions outlined in the summary be entered into, subject to the Mercury obtaining a planning consent and entering into a contract to carry out the refurbishment/redevelopment proposals to its building on St. George's Way, the form of the obligation on the Mercury and its parent company to be agreed by the Heads of Legal and Property Services in order to ensure that the Council's interests are protected,
- (3) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into all necessary contracts and agreements, including a conditional contract, arising out of this disposal process,
- (4) that the Council's reasonable legal costs and surveyors' fees will be met by the Mercury, and
- (5) to note the additional related agreements, detailed in the Supporting Information with regard to:
 - (a) the sale of an area of land to widen the existing loading access area (area B).
 - (b) the proposed grant of a right of way to provide improved vehicular movements within the site (area C) and finally,
 - (c) the development restriction to be imposed on the Council's adjoining land (area D) and on the Mercury's land (area E).

143. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.20pm.