



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: TUESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2005 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair
Councillor Draycott - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti
Councillor Connelly
Councillor Corral

Councillor Getliffe
Councillor Kitterick
Councillor Waddington

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144. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Willmott declared an interest as a board member of the East Midlands Development Agency.

145. 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 8

The amount of any expenditure to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services.

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.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE – FAÇADE DESIGN

146. PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - FACADE DESIGN

Councillor Connelly submitted a report at the request of the Leader, seeking to respond to the legitimate desire of the new administration to secure the very best 'flagship' Performing Arts Centre (PAC) building to assist the regeneration of the St George's area and more generally for Leicester. The report offered options for the Performing Arts Centre façade should it be decided to change it at this stage. The minute extract from the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 10 January 2005 was circulated and their preference for option B noted (copy of the minutes attached). Councillor Sandringham (Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Culture) was present for the duration of the item.

Mike Candler, Project Director, Cultural Quarter, outlined the current position with the PAC, and the options which could be considered. It was noted that the initial concept design, a glass frontage without louvers had not been developed over the past 12 months due to environmental reasons. An alternative option was being recommended (option A in the report) which had a glass and metal frontage and had been worked up to a detailed design stage and had been costed. There was also a further option (option B in the report) which retained the original concept of a glass frontage, but with sunshading louvers. It was noted that there would still be some environmental implications of proceeding with option B, but that it was the closest achievable option to the original design.

Members felt that the theatre would be a vital part of the regeneration of Leicester, and that a visible flagship building was needed. It was felt that option A did not link in with the intended regeneration aspect of the original design brief, as the zinc metal façade did not reflect the intended open space aspect of the project. The Cabinet also felt that as the building would be closed in by the façade, it would not fit in with the original 'inside out' concept of the theatre. It was felt that as a fully glazed design was no longer achievable, option B would be the best way forward for the City. It was also noted that the Chairman of the Haymarket Trust had written to the Leader expressing their view that option A would not be beneficial to the regeneration of Leicester.

Questions were also asked regarding the timetabling of the project, and the potential delay that any change in the design may result in. It was noted that if it was agreed to proceed with option B, there would be a delay of around 3 months, as it was not expected that co-ordinated design and the revised tender would be received until the end of March 2005, and work on site would be likely to be delayed until early August. However, Cabinet were informed that it could be possible to keep to the current timetable and start work on site at the beginning of May, but this would expose the Council to a higher level of uncertainty as detailed costings would not be known. However, the framework contract under which the work would be undertaken would specify a maximum cost. Under this scenario, approval to the project would have to occur before co-ordinated design had been completed and would therefore expose the Council to significant risk design as any additional costs resulting from changes to design would fall to the Council not the contractor. The detailed contractual

and partnering arrangements with the builders were also outlined to the Cabinet, and any potential effect on these a change in design may have were noted.

Members also asked questions about the financial implications of any change in design, how much the previous redesign had saved and if there would be any impact on the amount of funding which may be received from external sources. Questions were also asked regarding how much money could potentially be saved if the option of a glass façade with louvers was scaled down, so that there were only louvers on the front of the building. This information was not available at the meeting, and it was felt that this change may have a negative effect on the aesthetics of the proposed design.

In view of the need to have a flagship theatre building which would contribute to the regeneration of the St George's area, it was proposed by Councillor Connelly, and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet reject the recommendation to agree to progress the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) with the option A façade design detailed in sections 2.3 – 2.5 of the report, as it does not fulfil the original design brief and does not meet the need for a flagship building as part of the regeneration of the City,
- (2) that the relevant Officers be authorised to instruct the architects to redesign a fully glazed façade with external sunshading louvers,
- (3) to review the PAC project management structure to ensure that any risks associated with the fully glazed design and are minimised,
- (4) that an advisory committee be formed consisting of the Chair of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, the Labour and Liberal Democrat spokespersons of the Leisure and Environment Scrutiny Committees, and the Chair of the Haymarket Trust to assist the Leader and the Cabinet Lead Member for Leisure, and
- (5) that the decision is considered urgent because of the need to maintain the current programme and minimise the risk that design uncertainty and delay would bring at this key stage of the project; and that Cabinet procedure rule 12.d (that no call in may be made if the Cabinet decides when making a decision that the matter is urgent for specified reasons) shall apply.

147. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.25 pm

