



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 27 JUNE 2005 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor R Blackmore - Chair
Councillor Scuplak - Vice-Chair

Councillor Coley
Councillor Farmer
Councillor Grant

Councillor Gill
Councillor Metcalfe
Councillor Mugglestone

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27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Coley declared a non-prejudicial interest in the Item of Urgent Business, 'A City Academy to replace New College', as a member of the Interim Executive Board and the parent of 2 pupils at the College.

28. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Social Care for Older People

The Leader reported that Social Care Services for older people in Leicester were recently inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, working jointly with the Healthcare Commission and Audit Commission.

In a very positive judgement about the Department, the Commission found that most older people were being well served, and that prospects for further improvement were excellent. The Leader asked the Corporate Director to extend the Cabinet's congratulations to everyone in the Department involved.

Animal Welfare

The Leader announced that he had asked each political group on the Council to nominate a Member to sit on a working group on Animal Welfare. The lead officer would be Andy Keeling, Service Director, Resources in the Regeneration and Culture Department. It was hoped to hold the inaugural meeting in 'Cruelty Free Week', which started on 4 July.

29. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 June

2005, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

30. DATES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

that the Cabinet meet on the following dates for the remainder of 2005/06:-

11 July 2005	9 January 2006
25 July 2005	30 January 2006
5 September 2005	20 February 2006
26 September 2005	13 March 2006
24 October 2005	3 April 2006
14 November 2005	24 April 2006
5 December 2005	15 May 2006

All meetings to start at 5pm.

31. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred from Scrutiny Committees

32. SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW

Councillor Grant submitted a report which sought a decision from Cabinet on whether or not they wished to commence a review of the Council's support services as soon as possible, or whether they wished to see a pilot exercise through to completion first.

The Chief Finance Officer reported that a letter of representation had been received from UNISON that day in connection with the review and which had been given to Cabinet members.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the full Support Services Review be commenced as soon as possible and that the remaining £360,000 set aside be released for this purpose, and
- (2) that under the provisions of Cabinet Procedure rule 12d, no 'call in' of the decision be allowed on the ground of urgency, in order to allow the savings to be realised as soon as possible.

33. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2005-2006

Councillor Grant submitted a report on this year's Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) which detailed the Council's annual performance in delivering services

to Leicester residents and businesses. The Cabinet was asked to recommend the Plan to Council for approval, and agree, given the size of the document, that publication of the Plan be done electronically with a limited paper run.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Best Value Performance Plan for 2005/06 be recommended to Council for approval, and
- (2) that the publication of the Plan be done electronically.

34. STATUTORY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2004/05

Councillor Coley submitted a report meeting the Council's requirement under the Accounts and Audit regulations to formally approve the accounts prior to audit. The Cabinet was asked to note the Statement of Accounts for 2004/2005 and to recommend them to Council for approval.

A revised Consolidated Balance Sheet was circulated to Members.

It was noted that Members had previously had a full debate on the Accounts.

RESOLVED:

- that the statement of accounts for 2004/05 be noted, and submitted to Council for approval.

35. STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Councillor Coley submitted a report setting out a statement on Internal Control, the purpose of which was to show, at a strategic level, the systems that were in place within the authority for ensuring that there were sound levels of control over key areas of management.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the statement on Internal Control be approved, and
- (2) to note that the statement will be included in the Council's published annual statement of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005.

36. WAIVER OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

Councillor Coley submitted a report advising Cabinet of waivers to contract procedure rules approved by the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED:

- that the waivers be noted.

37. 3 MONTH REVIEW OF VIREMENT RULES

Councillor Coley submitted a report which reviewed the revised virement rules agreed by the Council at its meeting on 23 February 2005. The Cabinet was asked to consider initial views and experiences and make recommendations to Council.

It was considered that the administrative burden of the decision of the Council in February outweighed any benefit to the Authority.

RESOLVED:

that the following be recommended to Council for approval:-

- (1) that resolutions 2.11-2.16 of the Council Resolution of 23 February 2005, be revoked,
- (2) that the Cabinet's ability to vire sums between controllable budget lines, to approve additional expenditure without making compensating reductions and to approve reductions to expenditure, be limited to £1 million (either one off, or £1 million per annum on an ongoing basis) for any single purpose, and
- (3) that the present controllable budget lines be replaced by those shown on the left hand column of Appendix C of the report, plus the delegated schools' budgets (as a single line) consisting of items shown in Appendix C, and the Housing Revenue Account (as a single line).

38. GOING TO EXCELLENCE

Councillor Coley submitted a report outlining the anticipated changes to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) methodology following the CPA 2005 pilot and subsequent consultation. In addition, the report outlined the key actions required by the Council to maintain its drive for excellence.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the commitment to achieving excellence in service delivery and external assessment be confirmed,
- (2) that the Chief Finance Officer be asked to develop a Corporate Efficiency Strategy, to incorporate value for money assessments in the Revenue Budget Strategy 2006/09,
- (3) that Corporate Directors be asked to develop a Departmental Efficiency Strategy in each Departmental Review Strategy 2006/09,
- (4) that the performance reporting framework identified in the supporting information to the report be agreed,

- (5) that the Council's Partnership Working Guidance (1999) be reviewed, and
- (6) that the revision of the Corporate Plan around the four shared priority themes be supported.

39. IMPROVING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, AND FOR ADULTS

Councillor Grant submitted a report seeking Cabinet approval to reconfigure Council services in response to the Children's Act 2004.

The Town Clerk reported that work was still ongoing on determining the project management arrangements and proposed working currently within the £100,000 delegated limit and reporting back on detailed arrangements to the next meeting

RESOLVED:-

- (1) that the Council's services be reorganized into five departments, Resources, Access and Diversity and four front facing departments,
- (2) that there be two new departments within the 4 headed by a Corporate Director of Children's Services and Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services,
- (3) that the allocation of responsibilities for services be in accordance with annex a of the report, and otherwise as they are now, subject to any detailed adjustments approved by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Lead for Education and Cabinet Lead for Social Care and Health,
- (4) that the target date for implementing the new structure be 1 April 2006,
- (5) that the Chief Executive establish the necessary project management arrangements, including dedicated external project management support, with costs split between the Education and Lifelong Learning Department and the Social Care and Health Department and that expenditure be contained within the £100,000 delegation limit pending a further report to Cabinet,
- (6) that the Chief Executive initiate the procedures for recruiting the two new Corporate Directors, and
- (7) that under the provisions of Cabinet procedure rule 12d, the decision be considered urgent because of the need to initiate the project and Corporate Director recruitment so

that the new structure could be implemented on 1 April 2006, and therefore that no 'call in' be allowed.

40. ST GEORGE'S NORTH AND SOUTH AREA STRATEGY GUIDANCE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report outlining the recent administrative processes which the report 'St George's North and South Area Strategy Guidance' had been through. It was noted that the report was initially considered by Cabinet on 16 May 2005, where two additions to the report were made. The decision was subsequently called in and referred to full Council on 26 May 2005. Council recommended that the report be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration but with prior consideration by the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee had considered the report on 22 June and the relevant minute extract of that Committee circulated to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet was asked to give further consideration to the report, including the recommendations made by Cabinet on 16 May 2005 which formed the basis of the objection and any recommendation of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to be held on 22 June 2005.

Councillor Scuplak recommended that the Scrutiny Committee's comments with regard to the Linear Park be accepted but not their comments with regard to Lee Circle, as it was considered that the latter were unnecessarily inflexible in implying that replacement car parking and affordable housing must be in the Lee Circle Car Park area where it may not be appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the guidance be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan, subject to the following additions:

Add new paragraph 8.2.2 (accepting the recommendation of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd June 2005) –

Linear Park

The Leicester Regeneration Company Development Framework also indicates two new green spaces, one on Wharf Street south and one between Bedford Street south and Dryden Street. These, together with existing green spaces and appropriate environmentally improved linking streets, could form the basis of a linear park, flowing through the area and giving improved access northwards to Abbey Park. Opportunities should be sought to bring this to fruition. An indicative route is shown on Map 14.

Delete existing text of paragraph 8.3.2 and replace with the revised text (accepting the original decision of Cabinet held on

16th May 2005) –

Lee Circle

As noted in Section 4, Lee Circle Car Park itself is visually intrusive, with the surrounding road inconsistent with and disruptive of the historic street pattern. It is the intention of the City Council to work towards the removal of Lee Circle Car Park and to see it replaced with an appropriate and well designed mix of open space and new development together with a new road alignment.

41. STRENGTHENING THE COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Farmer submitted a report seeking confirmation of arrangements to strengthen the leadership and coordination of the Council's Community Safety functions, following an inspection by the Audit Commission.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that no permanent arrangements for the coordination of the Council's overall Community Safety functions be put in place until the completion of the reorganization of the Council as a consequence of the Children's Act 2004,
- (2) that an interim project director be appointed, to co-ordinate council-wide activity and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the line management arrangements to be determined by the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Community Safety and Cabinet Sub-Group on Crime and Disorder,
- (3) that the line management arrangements and host departments remain as now for the various elements of the Council's work, but the organizational review (for the creation of new Children's Services and Adults/Community Services), with the advice of the Project Director, should explore the benefits and disadvantages of bringing these functions together as part of the role of a Service Director and co location in one department,
- (4) that the costs of this arrangement be from unutilized resources allocated to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and as a first call on the £100,000 Crime and Disorder budget allocation in 2005/06, if required and that Cabinet note that proposals for use of the balance of this, although delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Lead, are to be subject to consultation with

Scrutiny first, and

- (e) to note that this proposal will form the basis of the Action Plan required following the Audit Commission Inspection findings.

42. PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE EMILY FORTEY AND PIPER WAY SCHOOLS

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report informing the Cabinet of progress to date of the consultation on the proposal to amalgamate Emily Fortey and Piper Way Schools and sought approval to publish statutory notices to cease to maintain the two schools and to open a new school based on the amalgamation of the two closing schools.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the responses to the consultation be noted,
- (2) that a new community school be opened formed from the amalgamation of Emily Fortey and Piper Way Schools, and
- (3) that publication of formal notices to cease to maintain Emily Fortey and Piper Way as separate schools be approved.

43. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to the admission to the agenda of the following items of Urgent Business for the reasons stated:-

Workplace Nursery

The reason for urgency was that the report needed to be taken as soon as possible, as recent developments need to be considered.

Gorse Hill City Farm

The reason for urgency was because of the need to determine the Farm's future as soon as possible, because of termination of funding under previous arrangements.

City Academy for New Parks

The reason for urgency was that the report needed to be taken as soon as possible, as recent developments needed to be considered.

44. WORKPLACE NURSERY

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report outlining options for the future of the Workplace Nursery. He referred to a petition he had received from the parents who used the Nursery. He recommended that given the progress made in working towards self sufficiency, that funding continue for the current year.

However, he asked the Director to ensure that progress was monitored closely and Members kept informed.

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the shortfall in the current year could be contained within existing budgets.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) that the action taken to implement efficiencies and initiatives to make the nursery self financing be noted,
- (2) that in the light of progress made with (1) above, the Deputy Chief Executive meet any 2005/06 shortfall from within the Education and Lifelong Learning Department budget and that any further funding issues to be dealt with in the 2006/07 budget process, and
- (3) that the Deputy Chief Executive keep the matter under review and brief Members as necessary.

45. GORSE HILL CITY FARM

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report which outlined the current position of the funding of Gorse Hill City Farm and a proposal to extend funding to allow time to manage the move to a recommissioning arrangement.

RESOLVED:

that approval be given for the continuation of funding in this financial year until 31 March 2006 pending further consideration being given as part of the budget process for 2006/07.

46. CITY ACADEMY TO REPLACE NEW COLLEGE

Councillor Coley declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item, as a member of the Interim Executive Board and the parent of 2 pupils at the College.

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report providing further information on the Department for Education and Skills' response to the Council on the acceptability of the alternative bid and their views on the urgent need to proceed to signing and Expression of Interest with the Interim Executive Board of New College.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that in the light of the DfES's strong advice, agree to be a co-signatory with the Church of England, David Samworth and the New College Interim Executive Board for an Expression of Interest for an Academy to replace New College and to initiate full consultation on this basis with the sponsors as part of the feasibility exercise; and
- (2) that the other bidders interest be welcomed, either as a

potential partner with the Church of England and David Samworth or as a future potential sponsor for other educational developments in the City.

47. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6pm.

