



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 9 JANUARY 2006 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

Councillor Suleman

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**174. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Gill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Report B, 'Review of Conditions of Fitness for Hackney Carriages' and left the room during consideration of this item.

Councillor Metcalfe declared a non prejudicial interest in Report G, 'Homecome Annual Report' and asked the Leader to present this item on his behalf.

Councillors Blackmore and Farmer declared non prejudicial interests in Report B3, 'Urgent Business – Land at Former Barkby Road Allotments', relating to their role in NRF partnership meetings.

**175. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Comprehensive Performance Assessment**

The Leader reported that just before Christmas the Audit Commission announced that the City Council had been awarded its highest rating – four stars – in this year's comprehensive performance assessments (CPA). After a harder test was introduced this year, only a few of the 470 councils in the country and just a handful of other major cities had received a four-star CPA rating. The assessment was made on the basis of some 650 performance indicators covering all services, along with a raft of recent external inspections.

The Leader paid tribute to all City Council staff.

**New Appointments**

The Leader welcomed Sheila Lock to the new position of Corporate Director,

Children's Services and to her first of many Cabinet meetings. He noted that the City Council had been fortunate in securing the services of a colleague with good urban experience in schools, children services and social care.

He also reported that the City Council had appointed Sally Burton, who would be joining the Council as Corporate Director of the new Adult and Community Services Department.

### **City Improvements**

The Leader reported that work had begun on a £19m City Council scheme to improve Leicester city centre. Gallowtree Gate, Horsefair Street and the Granby Street/Halford Street junction would be the first areas to benefit from the work. Improvements would include high quality paving, new seating, planting and street furniture, and the pedestrianisation of High Street.

The 'Streets and Spaces' scheme would regenerate the city's main shopping areas and tie in with the £350m extension of The Shires Shopping Centre.

### **'Under Scan'**

The Leader reported that the busiest pedestrian area in the centre of Leicester was to play host to the world's largest interactive video art installation when 'Under Scan' was unveiled in Humberstone Gate West from Thursday 12 January 2006. He reported that it was a free, public art installation featuring 1,000 interactive video portraits of people from the East Midlands and where people could make the portraits "come alive" by covering them with their shadows, which were cast by a powerful projector.

The installation would remain in place in Leicester for eleven nights until Sunday 22 January. The Leader reported that as well as shining a spotlight on the city of Leicester, 'Under Scan' was helping to mark the massive programme of cultural activity in the region, including major new capital developments. The Leader extended his thanks to Councillor Willmott for his involvement in this work.

## **176. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED:**

that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **177. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

There were no matters referred from Scrutiny Committees.

## **178. AREA COMMITTEES - PROPOSALS FOR EXPENDITURE**

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report seeking approval to spending proposals by Area Committees.

RESOLVED:

that the items of expenditure put forward by the Area Committees, as detailed at Appendix A to the report, be endorsed.

#### **179. REVIEW OF CONDITIONS OF FITNESS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES**

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, Councillor Gill left the room during consideration of this item.

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report seeking approval of the scope, programme and consultation project brief for a review of the Council's Conditions of Fitness for Hackney Carriages.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the scope of the review of the Conditions of Fitness of hackney carriage as set out in the supporting information to the report, the programme for the review set out in Appendix A of the report, and the consultation project brief set out in Appendix B of the report, be approved
- (2) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Lead to:
  - a) amend the review programme, scope of the review, or the project brief during the review, if this proved necessary to achieve the aim of the review;
  - b) approve those matters set out in the review programme; and
  - c) appoint specialist consultants to assist in undertaking the review; and
- (3) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead, to complete any necessary contractual documentation.

#### **180. REVIEW OF THE EAST MIDLANDS PLAN TO 2026 - OPTIONS FOR CHANGE**

Councillor Farmer submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the launch of the 'Review of the East Midlands Plan to 2026 – Options for Change' document. The Cabinet was asked to consider a number of options in the report and agree responses to the consultation.

Councillor Farmer referred to consideration of this report by the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 14 December and accepted

their preferred option.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposed responses set out in paragraphs: 2.2, 3.2, 3.4, 6.9, 6.13 and 7.6. of the report be approved
- (2) that in supporting option 2B for housing provision, this be on the basis of increased government funding to include support for increased provision of affordable housing; and
- (3) that, in line with Derby and Nottingham, the City Council take all appropriate steps to protect urban open spaces.

#### **181. PORK PIE AND ATTLEE WAY/GLENHILLS WAY IMPROVEMENT**

Councillor Mugglestone recommended that this report be deferred to allow the Cabinet to receive the comments of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee that was meeting on 11 January.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred until the special meeting of Cabinet on 24 January, to allow consideration by the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee in the first instance.

#### **182. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2004/05**

Councillor Farmer submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the statutory requirement under the new system of Development Frameworks, for the Council to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report. The Report must be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of December 2005 and subsequently made public. The Cabinet was asked to endorse the submission of the Annual Monitoring report and authorise its publication.

The relevant minute extract from the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 14 December had been circulated.

Councillor Farmer also reported that he had requested an action plan on ways to improve timescales for determining planning applications.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the submission of the Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State be endorsed and its publication authorised; and
- (2) that an action plan be prepared on ways to improve timescales for determining planning applications.

### 183. DECENT HOMES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR/REVIEW OF RENEWAL STRATEGY POLICY

Councillor Metcalfe submitted a report which reviewed Leicester's private sector housing Renewal Strategy.

Councillor Metcalfe noted the comments of the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 15 December and endorsed the thanks they had extended to the staff concerned.

#### RESOLVED:

- (1) that Home Improvement Grants be paid to owner-occupiers of homes that fall below the decent homes standard for work to bring the homes up to that standard, where either
  - a) households meet the Governments definition of a vulnerable household.
  - or
  - b) they qualify as low income owner-occupiers not receiving means tested benefits, under our local means test.and the property is
  - a) in a Home Improvement Area
  - or
  - b) not in a Home Improvement Area but a Disabled Facilities Grant is being paid
  - or
  - c) not in a Home Improvement Area but there are exceptional circumstances (to avoid fettering the City Council's discretion)
- (2) that work is completed in existing Renewal Areas but that in future Home Improvement Areas are declared, these to be areas with concentration of homes below the decent homes standard combined with concentrations of vulnerable households
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Link for Housing, to amend the detail of the policy in light of any ODPM requirements linked to the bid for resources
- (4) that a further be received on how the decent homes standard can be reached in the private sector
- (5) that the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised to bring the Swainson Road, Windsor Avenue and Abbey

Lane North improvement zones into the proposed Home Improvement Area programme (in that order) when finance permits

- (6) that the new grant policies be applied to the proposed new Home Improvement Areas from the time that works starts there and in existing Renewal Areas and citywide for all valid applications from 1 April 2006
- (7) that Renewal Services be withdrawn from Evington Valley Renewal Area ph1 and North Belgrave Renewal Area ph2 from 31 March 2006
- (8) that the Head of Legal Services be asked to advise the most appropriate and effective way of registering grant conditions as a charge on the property and the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised to act on that advice; and
- (9) that owner-occupiers of properties in Conservation Areas who apply for Home Maintenance Grants be considered on a case by case basis for additional funding to help towards any extra cost of meeting conservation area requirements.

#### **184. HOMECOME ANNUAL REPORT**

As Councillor Metcalfe had declared a non prejudicial interest in this item, Councillor Blackmore submitted a report advising the Cabinet on the progress of Homecome. He thanked all staff who had been involved in setting up this successful initiative.

**RESOLVED:**

that the success by Homecome in providing extra affordable homes be welcomed and subject to approval of the report on the Housing Capital Programme, the Council's continued support be maintained.

#### **185. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT FINANCE TRUST (LIFT) AND JOINT SERVICE CENTRES**

Councillor Gill submitted a report which updated the Cabinet on the current situation with the LIFT programme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the submission of the Outline Business Case to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister be endorsed; and
- (2) the concept of Customer Access facilities, be endorsed, on the basis that any such facilities agreed by the Council are funded from the Resources, Access and Diversity

Department's revenue strategy.

**186. TRACKING COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) - PERFORMANCE FOR 2006/07 SECOND QUARTER REPORT**

Councillor Blackmore submitted a revised report informing Cabinet of progress of the City Council's projected CPA performance for 2006/07 against the new CPA framework.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the developing situation in respect of the CPA framework, be noted
- (2) that the Cabinet leads be approved in consultation with the Leader of the Council
- (3) that approval be given for the use of threshold management as the basis for future performance monitoring reports
- (4) that the projected performance outturn for 2005/06 be noted
- (5) That progress made on the eight key corporate risks, as set out in section 6 of the supporting information and Appendix 4, be noted; and
- (6) That it be noted that the next report will include the performance of Corporate Plan indicators.

**187. SECOND GENERATION LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report seeking approval for him, as Leader of the Council, and the Chief Executive to sign the above agreement on behalf of the City Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive sign Leicester's second Local Public Service Agreement on behalf of the City Council
- (2) that it be noted that the receipt of the significant reward grant will be dependent on the extent to which targets are met and that a high level of commitment, co operation and potentially, investment above and beyond the pump-priming grant received on signing the agreement, will be required if the City Council are to be successful in securing this grant; and

- (3) that it be noted that Cabinet will need to agree how to manage the distribution of the Performance Reward Grant towards the end of the life of the agreement.

#### **188. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2005-06 - PERIOD 7**

Councillor Coley submitted a report showing a summary position comparing spending with the budget in 2005/06 as at Period 7.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the changes made to the original approved budget for 2005/06 be noted
- (2) that the expenditure to date and the budgetary issues which have emerged so far this year be noted
- (3) that the proposals put forward to ensure that spending is contained within the Departments' budgets be noted
- (4) that Corporate Directors closely monitor spend including energy conservation, vehicle use and any other measure which could prevent departmental overspend
- (5) that the establishment of an earmarked reserve for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), to cover future prudential borrowing costs as outlined in paragraph 5.4.4 of the report, be approved; and
- (6) that the use of the sums of £240,000 in 2005/06 and £144,000 in 2006/07, previously earmarked to cover the unfunded costs of leasing Wellington House, for the purpose of meeting the excess costs of CLABS in general, be approved.

#### **189. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2005/06 PERIOD 7**

Councillor Coley submitted a report updating the Cabinet on the progress of the Capital Programme 2005/06 as at Period 7.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that a revised level of programmed expenditure of £120.54 million be approved
- (2) that the level of expenditure to the end of October 2005 of £48.98 million be noted
- (3) that the position relating to capital receipts be noted
- (4) that an addition of £250,000 relating to Hastings Road Day



Centre modernisation to be funded by the Strategic Health Authority, be approved

- (5) that the additions to the Education programme, to be funded from service resources totalling £610,000 as detailed in paragraph 4.2.1 of the Supporting Information be noted
- (6) that the proposed reductions in the Resources Access and Diversity programme to fund the additional cost of the Town Hall scheme be noted
- (7) that it be noted that the forecast capital programme performance is 87% of the approved programme compared to a target of 90% be noted
- (8) that the prudential indicators for 2005/06 be noted; and
- (9) that an action plan be prepared by each Corporate Director for their relevant Cabinet Lead, detailing how slippage was to be managed.

#### **190. COLLECTION FUND SURPLUSES**

Councillor Coley submitted a report identifying the estimated financial position of the Collection Fund Account as at 31 March 2006. It was noted that this is a statutory duty as the surplus or deficit must be taken in to account when setting the Council Tax. The Cabinet was recommended to approve the estimated surplus of £1.75 million and approve the estimated shares payable to the Police Authority, Fire Authority and the City Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the estimated collection fund surplus figure of £1.75m be approved; and
- 2) that the estimated shares payable to the Police Authority, Fire Authority and the City Council as detailed in the report, be approved.

#### **191. COUNCIL TAX - TAXBASE**

Councillor Coley submitted a report detailing a recommended taxbase for the financial year 2006/7.

RESOLVED:

that Council be recommended to approve a taxbase for 2006/2007 of 75,490 properties expressed as the equivalent number of "Band D" properties.

## **192. LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD OF LEICESTER COLLEGE**

Councillor Coley submitted a report asking the Cabinet to appoint a representative of the City Council to the Board of Leicester College. It was noted that these matters were usually determined by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Group whips, unless there was a failure to agree between the Whips, as in this case. In these circumstances, the matter became a Cabinet decision.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that Councillor Smith be appointed as the City Council's representative on the Board of Leicester College; and
- (2) that Leicester College be asked to consider providing another City Council representative place on the Board of Governors, to allow broader representation from the City Council.

## **193. SINGLE NON EMERGENCY NUMBER PROJECT - ACCOUNTABLE BODY**

Councillor Coley submitted a report asking Cabinet to note urgent action taken by the Corporate Director of Resources.

RESOLVED:

that the urgent action taken by the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Finance and the Chair and spokesperson of the Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee, in approving the City Council as the formal Accountable Body for this project, be noted, the reasons for this action being treated as "urgent" being as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

## **194. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Leader reported that he had agreed to take an item of urgent business on **Land at Former Barkby Road Allotment Site.**

The reason for urgency was that depending on the option chosen immediate action may be necessary to spend the NRF funding before the end of March.

This report was recommended for consideration on the private agenda because it contained exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

## **195. PRIVATE SESSION**

Councillor Blackmore reported that he had agreed that Councillor Corrall could

remain in the meeting for consideration of Report B2, 'St Margaret's Bus Station', in his capacity as Chair of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following reports in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, because they involve 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.

PROPOSED SALE OF SOUTH LODGE, 307 LONDON ROAD  
ST MARGARET'S BUS STATION  
LAND AT FORMER BARKBY ROAD ALLOTMENT SITE

**196. PROPOSED SALE OF SOUTH LODGE, 307 LONDON ROAD**

Councillor Coley submitted a report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the freehold disposal of South Lodge, 307 London Road to Developer A in the sum detailed in the report, be approved
- (2) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into the resulting legal documentation; and
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Finance to approve any alterations to the terms and to take all necessary action to progress and complete the proposed disposal.

**197. ST MARGARET'S BUS STATION**

Councillor Corral was present for this item by agreement of the Cabinet.

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposals for the bus station as set out in paragraphs 2.4 – 2.5 of the supporting information and on

the plan, Appendix 3 be noted and approval given for their implementation in financial year 2005/06 and 2006/07 subject to tenders.

- (2) that capital expenditure up to £860,000 be authorised for improvements at St Margarets Bus Station, to be financed by a grant from the East Midlands Development Agency, from the Integrated Transport Capital Programme and from Prudential Borrowing or any other appropriate alternative source of funding, should the opportunity arise
- (3) that approval be given for Prudential Borrowing of £180,000, to be repaid from the additional rent income, which the improvements will produce; and
- (4) that agreement to any alterations to the plans following any comments from the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee on 11 January, be delegated to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member.

#### **198. LAND AT FORMER BARKBY ROAD ALLOTMENTS**

Councillors Blackmore and Farmer had declared non prejudicial interests in this item, relating to their role in NRF partnership meetings.

Councillor Coley submitted a report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that a lease of the site to Environ be explored on the basis that the period, area concerned and other terms are compatible with potential relocations associated with the LRC intervention areas should this be an appropriate site for those activities; and
- (2) that the matter be further considered at the next ordinary meeting so as to meet the timetable for the recycling funding.

#### **199. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm.

