



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: TUESDAY, 24 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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**200. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were requested to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

**201. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ian Marlow, Service Director, Housing

The Leader announced his regret that Ian Marlow, who had worked for the City Council for over 25 years, 15 as a second tier officer in the Housing Department, was terminally ill with cancer and unlikely to live more than a couple of weeks at best. As a result of this, he was ill health retired from the Council on Friday 13 January.

The Leader wished to record the Council's personal thanks to Ian and his family for the commitment and support he had given the Council over many years. The Leader went on to highlight some of Ian's major achievements for the Council; in particular the improvements he brought about in the housing maintenance service in Leicester; the first Beacon Award for the Council in 2000; the window and door replacement programme and the apprenticeship scheme which under Ian's stewardship, increased the number of young people offered apprenticeships from 15 to 60 per year.

The Leader also noted that Ian was an excellent ambassador for the Council and noted his work with the Major Cities Technical Officers' Group to share

ideas and bring about change in the maintenance of council housing throughout the Country. He also represented the Government on a working group that advised the Polish Government on maintaining and improving their housing stock.

As a celebration of Ian's work on behalf of tenants and the City Council, the Leader announced that the Corporate Director of Housing had agreed, in consultation with Members from all political parties, to rename the Blackbird Road Depot the Ian Marlow Centre and also to introduce an Ian Marlow Annual Apprenticeship Award in the Housing Department with the winner receiving £250.

#### Director of Adult and Community Services

The Leader introduced Sally Burton, the City Council's newly appointed Director of Adult and Community Services.

#### Worklessness

The Leader made reference to a visit he had made to 10 Downing Street and a recent Green Paper on employment issues which he welcomed comments on.

## **202. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - BUDGET 2006/07**

Councillor Metcalfe submitted a report summarising the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account for 2005/06 and 2006/07. The Cabinet was asked to recommend that the Council sets rents for 2006/07 based on the Government's 'formula rents' and also to determine service charges for recommendation to Council.

It was noted that a large increase in energy prices was anticipated. Such price rises would increase the energy costs of the district heating service by £734,000 in 2006/07 and a further £151,000 in 2007/08. This would require an increase in charges of 53% for 2006/07 and a further 7% for 2007/08 if the service was to remain self financing. However, as tenants of district/communal heating schemes had no incentive to regulate their heating or energy bills, Cabinet was asked to recommend the installation of heat control meters in such properties in order to reduce energy consumption. It was also proposed that, the increased service charges for district heating be limited until the heat control meters had been installed.

It was noted that the Housing Management Board and Housing Scrutiny Committee had been consulted and the relevant minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 12 January had been circulated to the Cabinet. Tenants had also been consulted on and supported the proposals.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Council be recommended to:

- (i) note the estimated working balance of £4.012m at the start of 2006/07 and approve the base budget for 2006/07 as detailed in Appendix A of the report;

- (ii) approve the setting of rents for 2006/07 on the basis of “formula rents” and within the ranges shown in Appendix B to the report, noting different properties would attract different increases and the overall average, in terms of income generated, would equate to a 4.9% increase overall;
- (iii) approve the installation of heat control meters in tenants’ properties attached to the district/communal heating schemes and agree a 10% increase charge to be applied in 2006/07, with £300,000 to be used from reserves to balance the account;
- (iv) approve the revised level of miscellaneous payments and charges to be applied in 2006/07, as detailed in Appendix D of the report;
- (v) approve the “prudential indicators” for the Housing Revenue Account, as detailed in Section 7 and Appendix E of the “Supporting Information” of the report;
- (vi) approve that £168,000 be added to the 2006/07 budget (and £570,000 per annum in future years) to facilitate the inclusion of £6m of additional HRA capital expenditure in the 2006/07 Housing Capital Programme, to be financed by unsupported borrowing under the Prudential Framework;
- (vii) approve the inclusion of £4m Capital Expenditure charged to Revenue Account in the 2006/07 HRA budget, to supplement the 2006/07 HRA Capital Programme.

### **203. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005-06 and 2006-09**

Councillor Metcalfe submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the position of this year’s Housing Capital Programme as at Period 7, revising the forecast for the 2005/06 outturn and proposing a 3 year Housing Capital Programme for 2006/09.

It was noted that the Housing Management Board and Housing Scrutiny Committee had been consulted and the relevant minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 12 January had been circulated to the Cabinet. Tenants had also been consulted on and supported the proposals.

#### **RESOLVED:**

that Council be recommended to

- (i) approve the revised programme, outlined in Appendix 2 of the report, for 2005/06 and funding arrangements outlined

in paragraph 3.2 of the Supporting Information, and authorize the Head of Legal Services to enter into any contracts necessary to maximize the spend against the revised programme;

- (ii) approve the resources shown in Appendix 1 of the report, including the use of Housing Maintenance DSO Profits, Housing Balances (£4.0m in 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09) and £7.75m from utilizing the Prudential Borrowing Framework to support the Housing Capital Programme (£6m in 2006/2007 and £1.75m in 2007/2008);
- (iii) approve the Housing Capital Programme for 2006/2009 outlined at Appendix 3 of the report including a small level (3.5%) of over programming, and delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to authorize any contracts, and the Head of Legal Services to sign any contracts within the overall programme, to achieve a maximum spend against the resources available;
- (iv) approve, within the 2006/7 programme, a grant of £2.75m to HomeCome to acquire properties in accordance with the Leicester Strategy for Affordable Housing and the Housing Needs Survey;
- (v) note that the 2006/07 Programme will be reviewed during the financial year, and the 2007/09 Programmes will be subject to further ratification as part of the normal annual budget cycles (in particular, commitment to use prudential borrowing will be reviewed at this time); and
- (vi) delegate, to the Corporate Director of Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing, authority to approve bids from Community Associations under the 'CRI' allocation.

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

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report detailing proposals for the Pork Pie junction and Glenhills Way for Cabinet's consideration for recommendation to Council.

It was noted that the report had been considered by both the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee and the Aylestone, Eyres Monsell and Freeman Area Committee and the relevant minutes of those meetings on 11 January and 18 January respectively had been circulated to the Cabinet. Both Committees had concerns about the proposals.

It was noted that officers professional view was that the scheme as proposed in the report was the one that they would advise. However, in the light of the

comments of the Scrutiny Committee and the Area Committee, the Cabinet agreed to re-examine the scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

That having regard to the views of both the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee and the Area Committee on this matter, officers be asked to bring back as a matter of urgency, a further report which provided costed options, with benefits and disbenefits of constructing the scheme in two phases, with the Area Committee being consulted on the report, if time permitted.

**205. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 5.20 pm.

