



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2006 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor R Blackmore - Chair
Councillor Scuplak - Vice-Chair

Councillor Coley
Councillor Gill
Councillor Grant

Councillor Mugglestone
Councillor Ramsdale
Councillor Smith

Councillor Suleman

* * * * *

135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sandringham

136. 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 Act applied to them.

No declarations were made.

137. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Adults Social Care Services retention of their two star rating

The Leader informed the Cabinet that the City Council's Adult Social Care function had retained its two star rating from the Commission for Social Care Inspection. He reported that in assessing performance, the Commission reached judgements against a set of standards and criteria, drawing on evidence from a number of sources which included performance indicators and statistics, planned targets, monitoring information, inspections of services and judgements about leadership, governance and budgetary management and priority. It was noted that the new Adults and Housing Department now provide Adult Social Care services. The Leader passed on his thanks and congratulations to staff in the Adults and Housing Department for this achievement.

138. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2006, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

139. MATTERS REFERRED FROM COMMITTEES

- a) Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee - 23 November 2006

Business Improvement District (BID)

The above Committee agreed as follows:

- “(1) that the Committee expresses its disappointment that vote on the Business Improvement District was not successful;
- (2) that the Committee recommends that the Cabinet supports a revised Business Improvement District in future with clearer political leadership;
- (3) that the Committee recommends that Cabinet give its support to having effective City Centre Management in place; and
- (4) that the Committee receives a report on what the Council could do to be more supportive to a future Business Improvement District”

Councillor Scuplak responded to the recommendations of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee. In response to the first recommendation, he shared the disappointment of the committee that the vote on the Business Improvement District was not successful.

In response to the second recommendation, he explained that it would be futile to make a revised proposal in the near future as the majority of voters were against the previous proposal. It was noted that there was a substantial number of large business ratepayers in the BID area who had a national policy against Business Improvements Districts. In addition, a number of businesses in the BID area were situated in managed shopping areas and therefore BID status would be of little advantage to them. It was noted that neither of these situations were likely to change in the near future.

In response to the third recommendation, Councillor Scuplak explained that the existence of a BID company was an integral part of the plan for effective city centre management in the future. As this would not now be happening, this issue was needed to be reconsidered. He welcomed the opportunity for scrutiny committees to give their views and ideas on

this issue.

In response to the final recommendation, Councillor Scuplak noted that the 'prime mover' for a BID had to be the private sector. He would however wish to be as supportive as possible.

- b) Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee - 23 November 2006

Leicester as an Environment City

The above Committee agreed as follows:

- “(1) that the Committee receive a further report which develops the ideas raised in the presentation and in the discussion by Councillors; and
- (2) that the Cabinet be encouraged to consider climate change as part of the budget process”

Councillor Smith responded to the above comments by stating that he was currently looking at ways of considering climate change as part of the budget process.

140. AREA COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

The Leader submitted a report that sought Cabinet endorsement of spending proposals by the Area Committees.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the expenditure proposals in Appendix A of the report be approved; and
- (2) that the budget commitments spent ahead of this Cabinet meeting but agreed by officers in consultation with the relevant councillors as a matter of urgency due to time constraints, be noted.

141. HIGHFIELDS CENTRE

Councillor Gill submitted a report that presented Members with options for the future management of the Highfields Centre.

An addendum report that detailed a number of consultations that had taken place had been circulated to the Cabinet.

Councillor Gill proposed option 2 as set out in the report as a step towards community governance of the Highfields Centre. Councillor Gill also thanked staff involved in securing this proposal, and in particular the Chair of the

Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Maureen Milgram Forrest, for her vital role in the process.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the current position of the development of the Highfields Centre in relation the capital development of the extension and refurbishment to the building be noted
- (2) that the report, "Highfields Youth and Community Centre Management and Governance Review – Final Report" published in February 2004 be noted
- (3) that previously agreed revenue expenditure to support the expanded service provision of the Highfields Centre be acknowledged
- (4) that a Strategic Management Board be established consisting of 4 representatives of each of the City Council, the Highfields Community Association, and the funding bodies, with the aim of developing a viable range of services and activities to meet the needs of the local residents of Highfields and the citizens of Leicester, and to take the centre through the 4 Phases toward community governance set out in the Timiti report; the Strategic Management Board to have an initial 24-month period to achieve a vibrant and viable centre and recommend a suitable long-term management arrangement for the consideration of Cabinet.
- (5) that the proposals submitted on behalf of the funding parties be noted
- (6) that Maureen Milgram Forrest, Chair of the LSC, chair the steering committee in the initial months and that this should the then pass to the Highfields Community Association; and
- (7) that the list of challenges contained in the funding parties' proposal be noted.

142. TRANSFER OF HIGHFIELDS CHILDREN'S CENTRE MANAGING AGENCY

Councillor Suleman submitted a report that sought Cabinet approval for the transfer of 'managing agency responsibility' for Highfields Children Centre from the N.S.P.C.C. to N.C.H, and provided Cabinet with information regarding the delay in the transfer process and to recommend a way forward.

The Corporate Director of the Children and Young People's Department explained that such a decision could normally be taken under delegated

powers, but stated that this was brought for Cabinet approval due to potential risks in transferring governance of the managing agency responsibility.

RESOLVED:

that the transfer of the management agency for Highfields Sure Start Children Centre to N.C.H., be approved, subject to the Chief Finance Officer being satisfied that the due diligence exercise has appropriately minimized the level of risk to the Council.

143. DRAFT EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL PLAN

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that informed members of the formal public consultation period on the draft review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) for the East Midlands and summarised the key policy issues and to provide comments that would form the basis of the City Council's response to the consultation draft Regional Plan.

The relevant minute extracts from the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2006 and Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet, and Councillor Scuplak stated that he agreed with the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee's comments in relation to the need for a mix of housing, and shared their concerns with regard to the financing of the infrastructure to support the new housing.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed comments to the consultation Draft East Midlands Regional Plan, as detailed in the report, be approved.

144. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2005/06

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that reported on the preparation of the Council's second Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring report.

The relevant minute extract from the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet. Councillor Scuplak noted their comments.

RESOLVED:

that the submission of the Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State and its publication, be approved.

145. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that sought Cabinet approval for

revisions to the Council's Local Development Scheme and to set a date for adoption of the Revised Local Development Scheme.

The relevant minute extract from the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the programme for preparation of local development documents as set out in the Draft Local Development Scheme be approved
- (2) that the Local Development Scheme be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval
- (3) that the Local Development Scheme take effect from 22 January 2007, subject to the Secretary of State's approval
- (4) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Regeneration and Planning, to approve amendments to the timetable for production of the Waste Local Development Framework timetable

146. RENEWAL EFFICIENCY SAVINGS - FUTURE OF RENEWAL OFFICE AT 99 MELBOURNE ROAD

Councillor Smith recommended that this item be deferred until June 2007 in the light of several community groups expressing an interest in using the premises. The deferral would allow sufficient time for relevant contract negotiations to take place.

RESOLVED:

That a decision be deferred until June 2007 for the reason stated above.

147. LOCAL DISCOUNT FOR FURNISHED BUT UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES

Councillor Coley submitted a report that recommended that from 1 April 2007 the Local Discount currently granted to those responsible for paying council tax on furnished but unoccupied properties would be withdrawn leading to £137,000 additional revenue to the Council.

The relevant minute extract from the Resources and Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee on 16 November 2006 and the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet.

Councillor Coley reported that the report had been noted by the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee and supported by the Resources and Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

that the Council be recommended to remove the local discount on furnished but unoccupied homes with effect from 1 April 2007 under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Section 11A).

148. SCHEME OF DELEGATION: REVIEW OF DECISIONS MADE AT CORPORATE DIRECTOR LEVEL

Councillor Coley submitted a report that provided Cabinet with a routine summary of decisions made at Corporate Director level in consultation with Cabinet Leads.

RESOLVED:

that the summary of decisions made at Corporate Director level in consultation with Cabinet Leads during the period June to October 2006, as summarised in Appendix A of the report, be noted.

149. OFSTED/CSCI ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (APA) JUDGEMENT: 2006

Councillor Suleman submitted a report that informed Cabinet of OfSTED/CSCI's judgements on the Council's services for children and young people.

The relevant minute extract from the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 15 November 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet.

Councillor Suleman thanked the Corporate Director of the Children and Young People's Department and her team involved in ensuring that Leicester be graded as a good performing Council by OfSTED/CSCI

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the content of the 2006 Annual Performance Assessment report be noted; and
- (2) that the action points be noted and approval given for progress against these to be tracked through quarterly performance monitoring.

150. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT ANNUAL REFRESH

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report that set out upcoming issues in respect of the development and management of Leicester's Local Area Agreement (LAA).

RESOLVED:

- (1) that progress to date in developing Leicester's first Local Area Agreement and issues for consideration at the annual refresh be noted
- (2) that the Director of Partnership, Policy & Performance be authorised in consultation with the Service Director - Legal Services, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet lead for Partnership, to approve any changes or additions to the agreement through the annual refresh process prior to final submission to the Government Office East Midlands.

151. LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY AND STRATEGY

Councillor Coley submitted a report that updated the Council's existing anti-fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy. .

The relevant extract from the notes of the informal meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee on 6 December 2006 had been circulated to the Cabinet. Councillor Coley noted that this meeting had requested an addition to the document to refer to the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act with regard to providing protection to whistleblowers and a right of action against vexatious claimants and he recommended this be included in the strategy.

RESOLVED:

that the revised Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy be adopted, with the amendment detailed above.

152. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Leader reported that he had agreed to take an item of urgent business as follows:-

'Matter referred from Council – 30 November 2006 - St Gabriel's Community Centre'

The Council resolved:

" Council demands that Cabinet ensure that sufficient funding is provided to prevent St Gabriel's Community Centre from closing and ensure it continues to provide the much needed service it provides to the people of Rushey Mead, Belgrave and Latimer"

The reason for urgency was due to the impending closure of the centre.

153. MATTER REFERRED FROM COUNCIL - 30 NOVEMBER 2006 - ST GABRIEL'S COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Gill submitted a report that informed Members of the present arrangements with St Gabriel's Community Centre and presented options for future arrangements.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the present commissioning arrangements continue and contingency plans for the delivery of the youth and early years provision in the area in the event that the St Gabriel's Community Centre closes be put in place.
- (2) That the Corporate Director of Adults and Housing be requested to explore urgently whether other commissioning opportunities existed.

154. CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND CULTURE

The Leader noted that this was the last Cabinet meeting for Tot Brill, the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, and on behalf of the Cabinet, thanked her for her contribution to the Council and wished her well in her new job at the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

155. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.50pm.

