



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 2 APRIL 2007 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 Sandringham
Councillor Smith
Councillor Suleman

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225. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

226. 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.

Councillor Sandringham declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Appendix E, 'Disability Discrimination Act Initiatives 2007/08', as an employee of an organisation for which funding was proposed. She left the meeting during consideration of this item.

227. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

101 Call Centre

The Leader reported on the success of the 101 call centre and the good coverage for the service on TV last week and in the Leicester Mercury.

It was noted that call volumes had been climbing, culminating last Friday in the highest ever number of calls, when 246 people rang the service. He noted that this was a major success story for Leicester and a good example of partnership working with the police and other local authorities.

He extended his congratulations to all the staff involved in its success.

Local Neighbourhood Management

The Leader referred to the currently developing system of local neighbourhood management in five different parts of the city: St Peters, St Marks, New Parks, Beaumont Leys, and Saffron and presented an updated briefing publication on progress so far.

Appointment of Corporate Director of Regeneration & Culture

The Leader congratulated Andy Keeling on his appointment as Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture.

Items referred from Council on 30 March 2007

The Leader reported that two items had been referred back to Cabinet at last Thursday's Council Meeting - the Animal Friendly Report (which he had agreed to take as a matter of urgent business) and the enforcement of parking regulations in residential streets, on which a report would be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

228. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2007, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

229. MATTERS REFERRED FOM COMMITTEES

Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Committee – 21 March 2007

Proposed Funding Changes to ESOL Provision

The following was agreed at the above meeting.

“that, in view of the proposed funding changes put forward by the LSC, and of the large number of disadvantaged Leicester residents likely to be affected by these proposals, Cabinet be asked to give consideration to look at alternative ways of funding the ESOL provision in Leicester”.

Councillor Gill responded to the referral and reported that the Adult Skills and Learning Service proposed to second a full time member of staff until 31 May 2007 with a specific brief as follows:-

- a) to work up some viable options for alternative ways of funding ESOL provision
- b) to analyse the need for ESOL and use that information to prepare evidence to support lobbying at national, regional and local level for the

economic and social benefits of ESOL provision

- c) to expand work with Leicestershire LSC on a pilot project for ESOL provision to support an increase in employment opportunities for BME communities linked to the City Strategy Initiative. It was noted that it was hoped that this would be funded nationally.

230. AREA COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

Councillor Sandringham submitted a report that sought Cabinet approval of spending proposals by Area Committees.

RESOLVED:

that the Area Committee budget proposals detailed in Appendix A of report be approved.

231. CHARGING FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL CARE SERVICES FAIRER CHARGING POLICY

Councillor Gill submitted a report that sought approval for the revision and updating of the Fairer Charging Policy. The relevant minute extract from Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 21 March 2007 had also been circulated.

RESOLVED:

that the updated Fairer Charging Policy Document, as attached to the report, be approved for implementation from 16 April 2007.

232. FAIR ACCESS TO CARE SERVICES - ACCESS, ELIGIBILITY AND PROVISION OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Councillor Gill submitted a report that outlined the requirement to determine eligibility for services under the Government's guidance on Fair Access to Care Services.

RESOLVED:

that the continuation of the threshold of eligibility at 'substantial' and 'critical', as indicated in Appendix A of the report, be supported.

233. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT INITIATIVES 2007/08

Councillor Coley submitted a report that advised Cabinet of the works recommended to be funded from the Disability Discrimination Act Initiatives budget for 2007/08, and seeking approval to enable the programme to proceed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the works detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, including the allocation of £20,000 to the Access to Work

Scheme and the urgent works contingency, be approved.

- (2) that the Corporate Director of Resources be authorised to order the works.
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Resources be authorised to seek all necessary consents.
- (4) that the Service Director, Legal Services be authorised to sign any contracts as necessary to allow the work to proceed; and
- (5) that the Corporate Director of Resources be authorised to approve further works during the year, reassess or amend the programme as necessary, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources.

234. ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2008 AND BEYOND

Councillor Suleman submitted a report that briefed Cabinet on the outcome of the recent consultation exercise for School Admissions Arrangements for 2008 and made proposals for future years.

The relevant minute extract of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee on 14 February 2007 had also been circulated to the Cabinet and Councillor Suleman thanked the Committee for their helpful comments. He also congratulated the staff involved in the exercise.

Councillor Suleman noted that there were still some issues that needed addressing and reassured the Cabinet that there was still plenty of opportunity for discussions with regard to arrangements beyond 2008. He also gave an assurance that priority would be given to children living in Eyres Monsell for places at the Samworth Academy.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposed schools admissions arrangements as detailed in section 6.1 and at appendix A of the report be approved.
- (2) that the proposed methodology for future consultation in connection with admission arrangements for 2009/10 and beyond as detailed in paragraph 6.2 and 6.3 of the report be endorsed and supported.
- (3) that the proposed methodology and approach to the possible future Nursery/ F1 issues as a result of requirements stemming from the new Childcare Act 2006 as detailed in sections 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 of the report be endorsed and supported.

- (4) that the proposed methodology and approach to possible future variations to accommodate mandatory changes stemming from new statutory Admissions Code as detailed in sections 6.6.1 and 6.6.2 of the report be endorsed and supported; and
- (5) that the improved performance at secondary and junior transfer for September 2007 entry as detailed at section 7 of the report be noted.

235. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - TALL BUILDINGS

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that sought Cabinet approval for the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Guidance Document for Tall Buildings, which aimed to guide developers in the planning and design of tall buildings and stipulated the criteria by which they would be assessed by the planning authority.

RESOLVED:

that the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Tall Buildings be adopted.

236. LEICESTER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTER-AGENCY STRATEGY 2007/09

Councillor Sandringham submitted a report that provided information on the first Domestic Violence Interagency strategy in Leicester and sought commitment to assist the delivery of the strategy. Councillor Sandringham thanked the staff involved in producing the strategy.

The relevant minute extract from Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee on 28 March 2007 had also been circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

that the Leicester Domestic Violence Inter-Agency Strategy 2007/09 be endorsed.

237. DISPOSAL OF FREDERICK THORPE HOUSE SHELTERED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

Councillor Smith submitted a report asking Cabinet to consider the comments from the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee and indicate whether Frederick Thorpe House Sheltered Housing Scheme should be closed in the light of low demand for this facility.

The relevant minute extract of the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee on 28 March had been circulated to the Cabinet and it was noted that the Scrutiny Committee had made no recommendation regarding closure but that they had recognised the need for sheltered accommodation.

Councillor Smith confirmed that there was no opposition to closure from

tenants of Frederick Thorpe House or the ward councillors.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that Frederick Thorpe House Sheltered Housing Scheme be closed; and
- (2) that residents receive highest priority for rehousing and are paid statutory homeloss payment, their removal expenses and practical assistance with moving.

238. DISCRETION UNDER THE TEACHERS PENSION SCHEME

This item was deferred for further work to be carried out.

239. PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH BLUEPRINT IN THE WATERSIDE AREA

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that outlined the broad proposals for the Waterside Intervention Area developed in partnership with 'Blueprint' and seeking Cabinet approval to the principle of engagement with 'Blueprint' to progress the work.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the principle of working in partnership with Blueprint and the Council's other regeneration partners; English Partnerships (EP), East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) and the Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC) within the Waterside Intervention Area be approved.
- (2) that the principle of working in partnership with Blueprint and the Council's other regeneration partners (EP, EMDA, LRC) if appropriate, on other regeneration/development proposals, which it is thought are beneficial to the City Council be approved.
- (3) to note that further reports would be brought as required to formalise agreements and other issues arising from partnership working.
- (4) that the Service Director, Legal Services and the Chief Finance Officer must be satisfied that all proper legal, financial and procurement procedures (including where appropriate EU procurement rules) have been satisfied or addressed prior to agreement on further engagement with the agencies referred to in 1 and 2 above.

240. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair reported that he had agreed to the admission to the agenda of an Item of Urgent Business referred back from Council on 30 March with regard to an Animal Friendly Purchasing Policy. The reason for urgency was to enable

the Council to utilise the relevant skills and knowledge of the current Chair of the Animal Friendly Working Party, along with other Members of the Working Group, in the period prior to the local elections.

241. ANIMAL FRIENDLY PURCHASING

Councillor Sandringham submitted a report to enable Cabinet re-consideration of the request for resources by the Chair of the Animal Friendly Working Group following an Objection and referral back to Cabinet at the Council Meeting on 29 March 2007. It was noted that the Council agreed as follows:-

“That Council fully supports the Animal Friendly purchasing policy first proposed by the Labour Group but refers back to Cabinet the detail of implementation for the following reasons:-

- (a) Scrutiny had not had the opportunity to consider if this is the best way of achieving effective implementation.
- (b) The advice of the Chief Finance Officer which indicates this would increase the £1.3 shortfall in the budget. Council should understand the implications on the department’s budget before agreeing to this proposal.
- (c) The advice of the Council’s Legal Department which makes it clear that without further analysis this approach is not only unlikely to work but may run the risk of breaching section 127 of the LCGA 1988.”

RESOLVED:

that in implementing the decision of the Cabinet taken at its meeting on 12 March 2007, Cabinet notes the funding arrangements as identified by the Chief Finance Officer and in terms of the legal issues associated with this policy asks the Corporate Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture to initiate the required research to ensure successful implementation of the policy.

242. PRIVATE SESSION

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the 1 detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and taking all the circumstances into account, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the information as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Proposed Sale of Development Land at East Hamilton

243. PROPOSED SALE OF DEVELOPMENT LAND AT EAST HAMILTON

Councillor Coley submitted a report on the above. In considering the report, Cabinet were concerned that the Masterplan for the development of the area was expedited.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the freehold disposal of 4 hectares of land at East Hamilton shown on the Plan attached to the report, to Developer A, in the sum and on the terms detailed in the report, be approved.
- (2) that the Service Director, Legal Services be authorised to enter into the necessary legal documentation.
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Resources be authorised to approve any alterations to the terms of disposal and to take all necessary action to progress and complete the proposed disposal in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources.
- (4) that the Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources, be authorised to proceed with one of the under bidders in the event that the highest bid does not proceed to completion; and
- (5) that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture be requested to expedite the Masterplan for the area.

244. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6pm.

