



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2001 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair  
Councillor Patel - Vice-Chair

Councillor Draycott  
Councillor Getliffe

Councillor Holden  
Councillor Osman

Councillor Subedar

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**137. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were requested to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda and/or declare that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

There were no declarations of interest.

**138. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 29 January 2001, having been circulated to Members, be received, taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**139. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) Beacon Council Status

The Leader announced that the City Council had achieved Beacon Council Status for 'Maintaining a Quality Environment'. This was the second City Council success in the scheme and made the Council one of only nine local authorities to have won two. It was noted that, as well as acknowledging excellence in a particular area, the award of Beacon Council status also represented endorsement of the rest of the Council's services as a certain standard had to be reached throughout the Council in addition to excellence in one area.

b) Charter Marks

It was also noted that the Council had achieved two Charter Marks, one for Consumer Protection and one for the Domestic Noise Control Service.

c) Director of Environment and Development

The Leader announced that Peter Webster, the Director of Environment and Development was leaving the Council on Thursday 15 February. It was noted that Peter had been Director of Environment and Development at the City Council since March 1993 as well as Deputy Chief Executive since 1997. The Leader expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Cabinet for the significant contribution the Director had made to the work of the City Council and expressed his thanks and best wishes for the future.

Councillor Osman, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation echoed the Leader's remarks and indicated that Peter would be missed by both officers and members.

#### **140. EVESHAM ROAD/SAFFRON LANE LINK ROAD**

Following discussion at the last meeting, Councillor Osman submitted a report advising the Cabinet on the implications of revoking the improvement lines and schemes originally made to protect the route of the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane Link Road.

Councillor Osman reiterated that the Council had no intention to build a strategic East/West Link Road on this route and asked the Cabinet to re-affirm this.

It was noted, however, that there were a number of questions relating to the future potential use of this land which could not be answered until further studies were carried out. There were a number of potential uses for the land, as currently reserved, as follows:-

- a) a modern tram line or other public transport route;
- b) a new road to act as an alternative to Upperton Road, in the event of the viaduct having to be closed to some or all classes of motor vehicle;
- c) a new road to provide access to industrial land between the reservation and the Leicester-Coalville railway line.

It was noted that the results of studies on potential uses for this area of land would be completed in about a year's time. Whilst the Cabinet did not want to build new major roads, it did not want to cut off options for alternative uses.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the City Council's position that it has no intention to build the strategic east-west link, be re-affirmed;

- (2) that the Director of Environment and Development be requested to carry out studies into light rapid transit systems and Upperton Road, as quickly as possible and report back to the Cabinet as soon as it is known what implications there are for the future of the improvement lines and schemes; and
- (3) that no further action be taken on the improvement lines and schemes at this stage.

**141. PROPOSALS FOR THE NEW DIVISION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

Councillor Subedar submitted a report introducing the proposals for the new division for Lifelong Learning and Community Development in the Education Department. The Director of Education also gave a presentation on the proposals.

The views of the Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee had been circulated and Councillor Subedar also reported that the Education Partnership Board had endorsed the proposals and the comments of Scrutiny.

Written submissions by UNISON, GMB, NATFHE and the Highfields Association of Residents and Tenants had been circulated to the Cabinet and Mr. Kim Thorrington of the GMB union also addressed the Cabinet on behalf of all three unions and amplified the points made in his written submission.

It was noted that this was the beginning of a process and the Cabinet would take on board all the concerns and comments raised and gave assurances that consultation and discussion would continue. The proposals in the report gave direction to the re-organisation that had already been agreed in principle but did not prevent work on the details from continuing.

The Director gave assurances in response to Members' concerns as follows:-

- that there were no proposals to close any neighbourhood centres or interfere with current users' activities or centre opening times;
- opportunities for the necessary training for neighbourhood centre managers would be made available;
- the recreational side of play would be maintained.

The Director also agreed to bring a report back to Cabinet on youth provision across the City.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the statement of aims, mission and principles for the new Division as a basis for developing a strategic Community Learning Plan and a series of Community Learning Plans for each cluster in the City, be endorsed;
- (2) that the timescale for the establishment of the new Division's services and the ongoing review of its facilities, services and management arrangements be approved;
- (3) that the proposed structure for the management of the new Division and the associated post-filling arrangements be approved;
- (4) that officers be requested to establish a City-wide Lifelong Learning and Community Development Forum;
- (5) that the Cabinet's commitment to meaningful and active ongoing consultation with all stakeholders be confirmed;
- (6) that the implications for capital funding be noted;
- (7) that it be confirmed that the future funding for Lifelong Learning and Community Development was for future consideration by Members as part of the budget process;
- (8) that the role of neighbourhood centres in Lifelong Learning and Community Development be recognised;
- (9) that the Council's equalities policies and practices be strictly adhered to throughout the post filling process;
- (10) that the Cabinet's commitment to quality assurance and performance management between the centre and the clusters be confirmed; and
- (11) that the Director of Education submit a further report to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity, on youth provision across the City.

#### **142. REVENUE BUDGET 2000/01 - PERIOD 8 MONITORING**

Councillor Patel submitted a report showing the summary position comparing spending against the budget for all General Fund services and the Housing Revenue Account based on the first eight months of the year.

The Chair noted the importance of such monitoring reports to ensure tight management of the budget by Members and Directors.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the spend to date and the forecast outturn, be

noted;

- (2) that the action proposed, as detailed in the report, to ensure that spending is contained within the Departments' budget, be noted;
- (3) that the likely underspending in respect of corporate budgets, which would be returned to corporate reserves, be noted;
- (4) that the requested budget virements and transfers, be approved; and
- (5) that the Document Image Processing repayment schedule, be noted.

#### **143. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2000/01 - PERIOD 8 MONITORING**

Councillor Patel submitted a report advising the Cabinet of the position relating to all areas of the capital programme based on the monitoring position at the end of November.

Councillor Patel particularly highlighted the work arising from the Review of Secondary Education. It was noted that the scheme at City of Leicester School was completed in January. This was a £600,000 scheme involving remodelling of the Design Technology Block and classroom conversions. There had also been 1,500 boiler replacements, 1,100 houses had received window replacements and 800 disabled adaptations had been completed. Nonetheless Councillor Patel expressed concern at slippage in expenditure and reported that he had asked Directors to tighten up their monitoring. He also referred to the need to ensure enough capital receipts to fund the programme. Councillor Patel also proposed an additional recommendation in relation to the Education budget.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the revised level of forecast expenditure of £45.427 million, be approved;
- (2) that slippage of £4.371 million, be approved;
- (3) that the level of expenditure to the end of November 2000 of £20.5 million be noted;
- (4) that the position relating to capital receipts, be noted;
- (5) that the following additions to the Education capital programme be approved:-

Excellence in Cities - £2.4 million  
Linwood Centre - £50,370  
Parkfield Nursery - £7,515

- (6) that approval be given for the use of £301,454 from the condition focussed capital allocation to meet shortfalls in the budget of two new deal schemes at Bendbow Rise Infant School and Coleman Primary School and to refurbish the toilets at Medway Community Primary School.

#### **144. DISTRICT AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER**

Councillor Patel submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the key messages arising from the District Audit Management Letter for 1999/2000 and the main actions taken or proposed as a result.

It was noted that the overall conclusion of the District Auditor was that the Council continued to perform well. However, there were areas that needed further work and Councillor Patel had asked officers to report back on how arrangements for partnership working could be improved. The Chair also asked for the Cabinet's approval to a further report back on the issue of voluntary organisations raised in the letter.

##### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the actions taken by the Chief Executive as a result of the Management Letter, as detailed in the report, be noted and endorsed;
- (2) that the Chief Executive submit a further report on the two issues raised in the Management Letter with regard to partnership working and voluntary organisations; and
- (3) that the action plan arising from the management letter be referred to Scrutiny Committee to monitor implementation.

#### **145. BEST VALUE REVIEWS**

Councillor Willmott submitted reports on the following Best Value Reviews:-

Services to Older People  
Communications and Promotions  
Customer Care

It was also noted that at the last meeting of the Cabinet a process was agreed for monitoring the implementation of the Best Value Reviews and Members were asked to agree that this process be also applied to the Reviews now submitted.

The Cabinet considered the individual Review reports. With regard to the Review on Services to Older People the Cabinet noted the strong support by the Social Services and Personal Health Scrutiny Committee for the suggestion of an Older Person's Forum. It was noted that the Council had already agreed that such a body be established and work now needed to be

carried out on drafting terms of reference.

With regard to the Review on Communications and Promotions, Members supported option 3 for the provision of strategy development.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the monitoring process agreed at the last meeting of the Cabinet be applied to these Best Value Reviews;
- (2) that with regard to the report on the Best Value Review on Services to Older People the following be approved:-
  - a) that the draft interim implementation plan arising from the Review, as set out in general terms in paragraph 4.10 of the report, be endorsed;
  - b) that approval be given for responsibility for the following being allocated to the Director of Social Services, to be undertaken by the Assistant Director, Community Care: Old People's Services:-
    - the delivery of the individual elements in the interim implementation plan;
    - the identification of options for change in the services covered by this review;
    - the production of the final implementation plan;
  - c) that the procedures followed during the course of the Review, be endorsed;
  - d) that the Director of Commercial Services' assessment of the Review against the criteria set out in the Audit Commission's publication "Seeing is Believing", be noted;
  - e) that the strong support by the Social Services and Personal Health Scrutiny Committee for the suggestion that an Older Person's Forum be established to represent the diverse needs and voices of older people in Leicester, be noted and supported;
- (3) that with regard to the Best Value Review on Communications and Promotions:-
  - a) that the proposals in the report be approved;
  - b) that Option 3 be pursued in relation to the need to

develop a strategy for Communications and Promotions across the City Council;

- (4) that with regard to the Best Value Review on Customer Care:-
- a) that the improvement options and the Implementation Action Plan, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved, timescales being subject to the identification of corporate lead officers and adequate support; and
  - b) that the 2001/02 target for residents' overall satisfaction be 56% and the target for satisfaction for the handling of complaints be 35%.

#### **146. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR GENERAL SURVEY**

Councillor Willmott submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the results of Leicester's Best Value Performance Indicator General Survey carried out at the end of last year. The Cabinet was pleased to see that overall it was good news for the authority as it had performed well compared to other authorities.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

#### **147. PRIVATE SESSION**

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following report in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the paragraph 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.

##### Places of Worship - Hamilton

#### **148. PLACES OF WORSHIP - HAMILTON**

Councillor Patel submitted a report bringing the Cabinet up to date with the current position regarding the disposal of the above site.



An additional paper was circulated to the meeting explaining the options in further detail.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that negotiations on the disposal of the above site continue, as detailed in the private minute; and
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Director of Environment and Development in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to agree the final terms of the disposal and the funding arrangements for the infrastructure.

The full decision is recorded in the private section of the Minutes as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, that is, 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.

**149. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 7.10pm.