



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 05 MARCH 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 Roberts
Councillor Subedar

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158. 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 Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

Councillor Getliffe and Councillor Roberts declared an interest in Appendix A, "Housing Maintenance Expenditure - Presentation", as Council tenants but referred to their dispensation from the Secretary of State to speak and vote on such matters.

Councillors Draycott, Holden, Roberts and Willmott declared non-pecuniary interests in Appendix D, "Relocation of Abbey Meadows Depot", as members of the Co-operative Society. The Town Clerk advised they had a dispensation to speak and vote on such matters.

159. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

**160. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS - 12 FEBRUARY
2001 AND 26 FEBRUARY 2001**

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 February 2001 and the Minutes of the special meeting of the Cabinet held on 26 February 2001, having been circulated to Members, be received, taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

161. HOUSING MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURE - PRESENTATION

Councillor Draycott introduced a presentation on the Housing Maintenance Programme and also submitted a report which detailed the draft list of schemes proposed for funding from the Capital and Revenue programmes for Housing Maintenance for the financial year 2001/2002. The report also proposed criteria for Tier2/Community Associations to use in preparing bids for funds under the Capital Receipt Initiative - Neighbourhood Approach, under next year's Housing Capital Programme. Councillor Draycott proposed an amendment to the programme detailed in the report, with regard to the City-wide New Starts Programme detailed on page 16 of the supporting information. Councillor Draycott proposed that the two sums of money allocated for kitchen improvements and bathroom improvements should be combined and priority given to kitchen improvements.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the list of schemes for funding from the Capital and Revenue Programme for Housing Maintenance for the financial year 2001/02 detailed in the report, be approved, subject to the amendment of the City-wide New Starts Programme to merge the sums for kitchen improvements and bathroom improvements, priority to be given to kitchen improvements; and
- (2) that the criteria for bids under the Capital Receipt Initiative - Neighbourhood Approach as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

162. REPLACEMENT LEISURE FACILITY

Councillor Holden submitted a report updating the Cabinet on the current position with the replacement leisure facility at Hinckley Road, Braunstone on the former Wycliffe site and seeking approval to actions to progress the scheme. The report detailed the consultations that had taken place, the proposed timetable and the funding position.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the timetable for and the demolition of Wycliffe proposed to take place between July and November 2001, including use of the existing provision in the Capital Programme 2001/2002 to meet the demolition costs, be approved;
- (2) that approval be given for expenditure of £130,000 to be used from the provision within the Capital Programme 2001/2002 for project management support to fund in-house management and source external assistance where appropriate, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member;
- (3) that the capital receipts from the sale of St. Margaret's

Baths and Granby Halls Leisure Centre sites be ringfenced for the replacement project;

- (4) that the Capital Programme funding implications as detailed in the report, be noted and that these and Revenue Budget funding implications for the City Council would be firmed up when the project details were finalised;
- (5) that approval be given to exploring any shortfall on the overall funding package with other partners;
- (6) that the current indicative project timetable as detailed in the report as at February 2001, be approved; and
- (7) that further reports be submitted to the Cabinet at appropriate key stages throughout the project process as indicated in Appendix 2 to the report.

163. QUALITY PROTECTS YEAR 3 - CHILDREN'S SERVICES GRANT

Councillor Getliffe submitted a report outlining the Quality Protects Management Action Plan for 2001/2002 and the process for its implementation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Quality Protects Management Action Plan be endorsed and the process of its dissemination, implementation and scrutiny, as detailed in the report;
- (2) that the Cabinet receive regular reports on the Council's Corporate Parenting Strategy.

164. RELOCATION OF ABBEY MEADOWS DEPOT

Councillor Patel submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the latest position with the relocation of the Abbey Meadows Depot and seeking approval to actions to facilitate the project.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the relocation project be welcomed as a tremendous opportunity to regenerate one of Leicester's key potential development sites and to create jobs;
- (2) that the proposed deal be supported in principle, noting that the Council would be looking for a funding package involving key partners with a stake in the project, in particular:
 - (a) to note the need to consult the City Council's partners on the Leicester Regeneration Agency

about using the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to secure a contribution, recognising that the scheme plays a major part in providing employment opportunities in deprived wards and makes a direct contribution to the Public Service Agreement target of raising employment rates in disadvantaged areas;

- (b) to welcome the support the City Council would be receiving from the East Midlands Development Agency, as detailed in the report;
 - (c) to note that the City Council's contribution to the relocation would be substantial and that significant elements such as the purchase of the new site had already been identified;
- (3) that the pressures on the City Council's capital programme due to expected non-achievement of the capital receipts target set two years ago be noted, as well as the need to explore solutions to this issue at the same time as the funding of the depot relocation;
 - (4) that the City Council's partners be consulted about the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and funding options be discussed further with a report back to the Cabinet on 19 March 2001; and
 - (5) that the relevant Scrutiny Committees be consulted on the proposed funding solution between now and 19 March 2001 Cabinet meeting, either through a formal joint meeting of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee with the Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee or through such informal briefing as the Scrutiny Committees so wished.

165. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2001/02

Councillor Draycott submitted a report summarising a proposed programme of environmental works in the declared renewal areas and urban management areas.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposed environmental works in renewal areas as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report, be approved;
- (2) that the Home Maintenance Programme for Belgrave and Highfields Urban Management Area be approved as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report; and
- (3) that the proposed programme of works for the Environment Task Force (New Deal Rear Walls Scheme)

in North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2 be approved, as detailed in the report.

166. THE LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND STRUCTURE PLAN - PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Councillor Roberts submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the progress, future actions and the timetable for the production of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan. It was noted that the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, as well as other individual Members had expressed concern at the proposed use of the City Rooms for the Examination in Public of the Structure Plan because of the lack of disabled access at this venue. It was noted that two alternative venues had been suggested; these were Committee Rooms 2 and 3 at the New Walk Centre or the Blackbird Road Training Centre. It was noted that the Planning Inspector and Chair would be visiting both these venues to consider which was the most suitable. The resolutions of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 22 February were circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the progress leading to the Examination in Public for the above Structure Plan be noted;
- (2) that the proposed pre Examination in Public modifications be approved;
- (3) that a range of housekeeping and procedural issues/decisions, as detailed in the report, be delegated to the Director of Environment, Development and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Regeneration; and
- (4) that the contents of the resolutions of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 22 February 2001, be noted.

167. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Councillor Osman submitted a report which proposed expenditure on various transport schemes.

RESOLVED:

- that the report be noted for referral to the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee for their views and referred back to the Cabinet on 19 March.

168. STRASBOURG DRIVE FLATS - RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON DEMOLITION

Councillor Draycott submitted a report outlining the results of consultation with residents and the Beaumont Leys Partnership with regard to the future of the

flats on Strasbourg Drive, Beaumont Leys and proposing action to be taken in the light of consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the flats identified in the report be demolished including four empty properties at the bottom of Bishopdale Road;
- (2) that two flats which have been purchased under Right to Buy be acquired by the Council and that the Director of Housing be authorised to agree the purchase under delegated powers; and
- (3) that subject to consultation with the three remaining tenants, the blocks of flats on Fowler Close be included in the demolition programme.

169. RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

Councillor Draycott submitted a report outlining progress on the two pilot "Resources for Communities" areas. Further to the report, the Chair asked that timescales and targets be identified for the project.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that proposed improvements for each of the pilot areas be supported, subject to finance being identified where appropriate;
- (2) that the implications for other areas of Leicester of the 'common problems' be clarified and considered for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding;
- (3) that the pilot continue for a further six months subject to the bid for funding being considered and agreed from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund; and
- (4) that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet detailing targets and timescales for the scheme.

170. HIGHFIELDS ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

Councillor Holden submitted a report seeking approval for essential Capital Programme works to the perimeter fence for the Highfield Adventure Playground to meet legislative health and safety requirements.

RESOLVED:

that approval be given for expenditure of £30,000 from the Playgrounds Capital Programme for the provision of a new perimeter fence for the Highfields Adventure Playground.

171. OBJECTIVE 2 ACTION PLANS

Councillor Roberts submitted a report seeking approval to the City Council being the Accountable Body for Action Plans under priorities 2 and 3 of the Objective 2 programme.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the City Council and its partners develop Action Plans for Priorities 2 and 3 of the Objective 2 programme, that is, 'Strategic Development Opportunities and 'Sustainable Communities';
- (2) that the City Council act as the Accountable Body for Priorities 2 and 3; and
- (3) that the Leicester Regeneration Agency, in consultation with the City Council, determine which projects should be incorporated into the Action Plans.

172. DISABLED PERSONS' ADAPTATIONS - CASE MONITORING INFORMATION APRIL 2000 - SEPTEMBER 2000

Councillor Draycott submitted a report outlining performance targets for Disabled Persons' Adaptations and providing monitoring information on performance for April to September 2000.

RESOLVED:

that the following target be adopted for Disabled Persons' Adaptations:-

that 80% of cases be completed within the following timescales:

Stage	Category	Target (Weeks)
Stage 1	All	12
Stage 2	20 points or over	10
	19 points and below	25
Stage 3	Lifts	10
	Extensions	40
	Other adaptations	20
Stage 4	Lifts	4
	Extensions	15
	Other adaptations	8

173. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor Draycott submitted a report updating the Cabinet on the progress of the Empty Homes Strategy and seeking approval to actions to facilitate further

progress.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the progress that had been made to date in reducing the number of empty homes and the fact that this was set to continue, be noted;
- (2) that a rolling programme of Compulsory Purchase Orders on the hardcore of vacant five year plus property where owners have persistently refused to respond, be approved; and
- (3) that the exploration of Private Finance Initiatives to fund the acquisition and rehabilitation of properties in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord, be supported.

174. APPROVAL FOR ALTERATION OF LEASE TERMS FOR AYLESTONE HALL REFURBISHMENT

Councillor Patel submitted a report seeking Cabinet's approval to the insertion of new terms in the lease of Aylestone Hall to Hazlewood Plc to ensure the refurbishment of the stable block ahead of the main refurbishment of the hall.

RESOLVED:

that the following additional clauses be added to the lease of Aylestone Hall to Hazlewood Plc:-

- (a) the granting of an 18 months period to Hazlewood Plc to secure planning permission for the Hall scheme; and
- (b) that in the event that they are refused planning permission for the Hall and the City Council do not grant an extension then the Council will reimburse them for their outlay of £30,000 plus interest over the 18 month period at the Council's normal interest rate.

175. AGENDA NOTE: LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN - SECOND REPORT INTO MALADMINISTRATION BY LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL HOUSING DEPARTMENT

The Chief Executive reported that a second report had been issued by the Ombudsman into maladministration by the City Council's Housing Department in the case of Mr. Elm. Cabinet was asked to approve that the report be submitted to Council for determination.

RESOLVED:

that the second report into maladministration by Leicester City Council Housing Department be referred to the Council for determination.

176. PRIVATE SESSION

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 5

Information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient of, any financial assistance provided by the authority.

Paragraph 7

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).

Disjointed

Paragraph 12

Any instructions to counsel and any opinion of counsel (whether or not in connection with any proceedings) and any advice received, information obtained or action to be taken in connection with:

- a) any legal proceedings by or against the authority; or
- b) the determination of any matter affecting the authority,

(whether, in either case, proceedings have been commenced or are in contemplation).

De Montfort Hall Refurbishment Dispute

Employment Tribunal Proceedings

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.

De Montfort Hall Investigation

177. 'DISJOINTED'

Councillor Roberts submitted a report informing the Cabinet of recent developments with regard to the above project funded by the City Council and

seeking approval to cease the funding of the project with immediate effect.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that funding of the 'Disjointed Project' be ceased with immediate effect, for the reasons detailed in the report; and
- (2) that officers be requested to explore ways of providing continuing training for existing trainees.

178. DE MONTFORT HALL REFURBISHMENT DISPUTE

The Director of Arts and Leisure submitted a report advising the Cabinet of the final details of the dispute which had now been settled.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the final outcome of the refurbishment dispute as set out in the report, be noted;
- (2) that the final cost of the refurbishment project as set out in the report, be noted;
- (3) that the Director of Arts and Leisure be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, to finalise a detailed executive report to be used as a basis for the external investigation; and
- (4) that a public report be submitted on the outcome of the dispute to the Arts, Leisure and the Environment Scrutiny Committee.

179. DE MONTFORT HALL INVESTIGATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report seeking approval to the commissioning of an investigation into the De Montfort Hall refurbishment with the objective of establishing the management issues arising from the dispute over refurbishment with a view to strengthening future practice. Members asked that the commission allowed for presenting the report to Members and that regard be had to the need to publish a report with due confidentiality during the investigation.

RESOLVED:

that the Chief Executive commission an external investigation into the De Montfort Hall refurbishment, in accordance with the terms of reference detailed in the report.

180. EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL PROCEEDINGS

The Town Clerk submitted a report seeking authority for the Chief Executive to deal with legal proceedings brought by a former Council employee.

RESOLVED:

that the Chief Executive be authorised to act, as detailed in the report, in consultation with the three Group Leaders.

181. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 6.20pm.