



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: THURSDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2010 at 9:30 am

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Patel - Chair
Councillor Dempster - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti
Councillor Naylor
Councillor Palmer
Councillor Westley

Councillor Dawood
Councillor Osman
Councillor Russell

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Grant

Conservative Group Leader

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126. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Wann.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda and/or declare if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them. No such declarations were made.

128. NEW EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

Councillor Patel submitted a report that was to ask Council to consider the responses to the consultation on the Leader and Cabinet or Elected Mayor and Cabinet models of governance, according to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the 2007 Act), and to state the Council's preferred model of governance in advance of a resolution at a further Special Council meeting to be held on 22 December 2010.

Councillor Patel noted that the consultation exercise included responses from groups and organisations and that information in the report regarding comparison with other authorities showed the effectiveness of Leicester's consultation.

Members stated that this was an unprecedented position, which, if the preferred option was to be Elected Mayor and Cabinet, would give residents the opportunity to directly elect who would govern the city. It was also felt that this model would allow Leicester to be at the forefront locally, nationally and internationally and that it would be an appropriate model as more power was to be devolved locally. Members stated that the consultation had received a very good level of response compared with other consultations within the City and elsewhere.

Councillor Grant expressed concern regarding the methods of consultation, stating that he felt it was biased towards internet users and disadvantaged people who would use more traditional methods. He detailed specific areas of concern such as the poster sent to Knighton Library and timing issues on submission of web responses. He also stated that the report did not include concerns raised by Members about the consultation.

Cabinet Members stated that the consultation had been carried out within the requirements of the 2007 Act, and a wide range of consultation methods had been used, and this included both web based and more traditional methods of consultation, both of which had received a high response level.

Members were informed that the issue had been discussed at Westcotes Community Meeting, the majority of attendees of which supported the opportunity to directly elect who would lead the city, but with some concern about the cost of campaigning, which could limit those who wished to be a candidate. Members were also informed that some residents had contacted their ward councillors stating that they were opposed to the Elected Mayor model because they felt that there was too little information, whereas others supported the model. There was also concern regarding potential implications for the role of Lord Mayor. Members stated that the consultation was sufficient and robust enough to take into consideration in making a proposal.

With regard to the consultation, the Monitoring Officer stated that the 2007 Act required the Council to take “reasonable” steps to consult with the electorate and other interested parties, which had been done. He also drew members’ attention to the need for Council to consider economy, efficiency and effectiveness in drawing up its proposals. He also stated that if the Council was mindful to propose the Elected Mayor and Cabinet model, work would take place to address the potential implications for the position of Lord Mayor and efforts would be made to maintain the City’s tradition. Members strongly advocated the retention of the civic role as much as possible.

Members thanked officers for the work done in carrying out the consultation and bringing the responses together.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommends to Council that it states its preferred model to be Elected Mayor and Cabinet.

129. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 10.10am.