



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2002 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair
Councillor Patel - Vice-Chair

Councillor Draycott
Councillor Getliffe
Councillor Holden
Councillor Kavia

Councillor Osman
Councillor Roberts
Councillor Subedar
Councillor Westley

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215. 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.

Councillors Getliffe and Roberts declared personal interests in the reports entitled "Budget Strategy 2002/03 to 2004/05" and "The Council's General Fund Budget 2002/03", in view of them both being Council tenants. However under paragraph 10 (d) of the Members' Code of Conduct, they regarded themselves as not having a prejudicial interest as long as the discussion did not relate to their individual tenancy.

Councillor Roberts also declared a personal interest in the reports entitled "Budget Strategy 2002/03 to 2004/05" and "The Council's General Fund Budget 2002/03" due to his wife being the Senior Play Leader on the New Parks Adventure Playground. Within the generality of Budget reports, he did not consider this interest to be prejudicial but would consider the matter to become prejudicial should the debate focus on that specific or directly related grants and would withdraw from the room.

Councillor Holden declared a personal interest in the reports entitled "Budget Strategy 2002/03 to 2004/05" and "The Council's General Fund Budget 2002/03" due to the Library Services providing services at his place of work.

216. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 February 2001, having been circulated to Members, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

217. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Willmott paid tribute to Mr Harry Richmond, former Councillor and Councillor Wigglesworth who both died recently.

The Meeting stood for a minutes silence in their memory.

218. BUDGET STRATEGY 2002/03 TO 2004/05

Councillor Patel submitted a report outlining the proposed Departmental Revenue Strategies for the period 2002/03 – 2004/05 and a proposed change to the Education budget approved at Council on 31 January 2002.

Councillor Patel noted this had been a difficult budget to set. In particular he noted the difficulties faced by the Social Services department, which had been highlighted by the Social Services and Personal Health Scrutiny Committee and UNISON. He also noted that the pledge with regard to the Council Tax rise had been kept and the pledge to provide more money for Education had been addressed. In addition, crime and disorder, an issue raised by public consultation as being a priority, was also being addressed. He also noted that two additional sources of funds had been received from the Government but were one-off funds. These would be used partly to make a number of improvements to the City Centre and to address the problems faced by the Social Services Department. He also referred to a proposed new approach to voluntary sector funding on which consultation was being undertaken with Voluntary Action Leicester. He noted that the Cabinet had responded to concerns over concessionary fares and the funding of bus services and with regard to cuts to the book fund, these being proposals made by Directors to Scrutiny Committees in December 2001. He stated the Cabinet would continue to lobby the Government for further funding with regard to persons from abroad.

Councillor Osman referred to the concerns expressed by HITSLINK about its funding and a petition with 500 signatures on this and the ending of SRB funding for another body.

Councillor Kavia responding to concerns regarding the ending of funding to SRB projects stated that these funds were time limited and set up to address specific purposes, and therefore all projects should have exit strategies for when grant money ceased.

With reference to the concerns raised by HITSLINK, Councillor Patel made

further reference to the proposed new approach to funding for the voluntary sector which did not mean specific cuts for specific organisations at this stage. Instead of the current banded inflation policy, all organisations funded by the Council would have to go through a process whereby they would be divided into different categories according to how they addressed the priorities of the City Council. No decision had yet been made about any organisation.

Councillor Getliffe thanked his colleagues for recognising the difficulties faced by the Social Services Department.

Councillor Willmott told the meeting he was cautious about the future as some of the funding that was received this year was one-off and could only deal with problems in the short term. He noted there would still be hard decisions to take next year, although he stated he would continue to lobby central Government on the issues where difficulties would continue to be faced.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the results of consultation as described in the supporting information, be noted;
- (2) that the Council be recommended to adopt the Corporate Revenue Strategy for 2002/03 to 2004/05, shown at Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) that each Departmental Revenue Strategy, as detailed in the report be recommended to Council for approval;
- (4) that the Chief Financial Officer's view that the budget needed to be very tightly managed in 2002/03, be noted
- (5) that an early monitoring report after 3 months of the new year, be submitted to Cabinet;
- (6) that Council be recommended to approve that the additional one-off resource from the Council Tax Collection Fund of £1.110m, agreed by Cabinet on 14 January, be given to Social Services in 2002/03;
- (7) that the Local Strategic Partnership be consulted on neighbourhood renewal fund support to complement funding for Education and Social Services in respect of services which benefited deprived communities;
- (8) that Council be recommended to approve the one-off "floor" payment of £1m allocated to improvement to the City Centre and other environmental improvements to meet concerns expressed by the public in the Residents' Survey (such schemes to be held as a corporate budget provision until detailed spending plans were approved by Cabinet);

- (9) that Council be recommended to increase the agreed Education budget by £111,900 in 2002/03 only and £11,900 thereafter reflecting: £100,000 one-off funding to support Persons from Abroad in 2002/03; ongoing reductions of £78,900 in respect of savings attributable to Best Value Reviews: additional budget virements of £90,800;
- (10) that, subject to approval of the budget by Council on 6 March, Directors be authorised to take action to achieve any savings identified in the strategies for the years 2003/04 and 2004/05;
- (11) that the funding of Social Services be reviewed once the outcome of the national government funding review was known;

219. THE COUNCIL'S GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2002/03

Councillor Patel submitted a report summarising the overall proposed General Fund Revenue Budget for 2002/03 and sought formal endorsement of the draft budget report for submission to Cabinet on 6 March 2002.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposed General Fund Revenue Budget for 2002/03, outlined in the report, be approved for recommendation to Council;
- (2) that Appendix A of the report be approved as the report to Council on the Revenue Budget and proposed Council Tax for 2002/03, subject to the Chief Financial Officer inserting final figures for the Police element of the Council Tax.

220. REVITALISING NEIGHBOURHOODS

Councillor Willmott submitted a report which developed final proposals emanating from the Revitalising Neighbourhoods Project, following consultation that had taken place with staff, Trade Unions, schools, partner organisations, the Local Strategic Partnership and Community organisations. The report also referred to the Office for Public Management report which was an independent analysis of the consultation undertaken and a benchmarking exercise against similar authorities.

Councillor Willmott made the following points:-

- that the proposals were designed to bring the Council close to the local community and addressed the Government's requirements for a neighbourhood renewal strategy
- that this was only the start of the process and that once the neighbourhood

- managers were appointed, they should work closely with the project team and the Director of Neighbourhood Renewal and have meetings on a monthly basis with key Cabinet Members
- that the current City Centre Forums should be recognised in future work and that City Centre residents should be involved
 - that staff development and communications be looked into as part of the proposals
 - that further discussions were needed on the management of parks
 - that the title of "Town Clerk" would be retained

Councillor Osman requested a minor amendment be made to the recommendation in Appendix 4, number 26, that the words "in consultation" be included before "with Trade Unions".

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the results of the consultation and the response to the issues raised, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the revised proposals set out in Appendix 4 and the text of the report be approved, subject to the additional points made by Members and recorded above;
- (3) that a project team be established to oversee the implementation phase of the project as set out in the report; and
- (4) that funding of £860,000 be sought from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for the items in the report requiring 2 year funding.

221. VISITOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Councillor Holden submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's approval to take forward a Visitor Development Strategy for Leicester. It was noted that this report was stage one of a three stage process and provided a strategic direction for Visitor Development which would be implemented through an action planning process managed by Leicester Promotions Limited. It was intended to present the Strategy at the joint City and County tourism conference at the end of February 2002.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Visitor Development Strategy be presented to stakeholders at the joint City and County tourism conference at the end of February;
- (2) that a further report be brought to Cabinet when the Action Plan was complete;
- (3) that the Strategy and associated tourism activities should

provide the future strategic framework for all of the work delivered by Leicester Promotions Ltd. under its contract to the City Council, be approved in principle; and

- (4) that a report be presented to a future meeting identifying the implications of making the management of this strategy the sole focus of Leicester Promotions' activities on behalf of Leicester City Council.

222. ADVICE STRATEGY

Councillor Kavia submitted a report that sought to define the relationship between the City Council and the Community Legal Services Partnership for Leicester; establish the City Council's priorities for commissioning of advice services; and put in place the arrangements necessary to secure Best Value in the provision of advice services within Leicester. The report also outlined details of the consultation that had taken place on the draft strategy including those of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. In particular the broad support given by the Scrutiny Committee was noted.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the continued participation of Leicester City Council within the Community Legal Service Partnership for Leicester be approved for the period of this strategy ;
- (2) that the following strategic priorities be approved as the basis for future commissioning decisions; the need to increase the amount of initial advice being provided in local communities and to communities of interest; to consolidate services at Leicester Law Centre and Leicester Money Advice Ltd; to develop targeted take-up campaigns; to improve the quality of advice provision through the development of accredited training programmes and the adoption of a customer charter for advice services contained in Section 3 of the supporting information of the report;
- (3) that the role of the single commissioning point for advice services which is; to operate as the main point of contact between the Council and the Community Legal Services Partnership; to provide recommendations on the strategic priorities for advice services; to commission services that meet the needs of Leicester's communities and are based on agreed strategic priorities in line with the principles of Best Value; to introduce and monitor performance indicators for advice services through service specifications and direct service information; and to compare performance between local providers and with those in other local authority areas and utilise this information in future commissioning decisions; be

approved;

- (4) that the performance of advice services be reported annually to Cabinet and to the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee;
- (5) that funding for advice services be linked to the attainment of the Community Legal Service Quality Mark from April 2003 onwards and that directly provided services also attain the Quality Mark from that date; and
- (6) that the Charter for Advice Services be approved and that all advice services receiving funding from or being provided by the Council demonstrate that the terms of the Charter are being met over the period of this strategy.

223. GIPSY LANE BRICKWORKS, SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Councillor Kavia submitted a report outlining the proposed Gipsy Lane Brickworks Site Development Guidance written for the purpose of informing landowners and developers of the appropriate forms of development for the site. It was recognised that this was an important site and there was a need to ensure high quality urban design principles were followed in its development.

Officers agreed to respond in writing to a question from Councillor Draycott regarding a Traffic Impact Assessment and whether this would cover traffic flows on associated side roads.

RESOLVED:

that the Gipsy Lane Site Development Guidance be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan.

224. AUTOMATION OF UPVC WINDOW FACTORY

Councillor Draycott submitted a report that sought approval to purchase new machinery at a cost of £700,000 to further automate the production of uPVC windows at the Council's window production factory. This would increase production, and allow further types of window to be included in the programme whilst saving money and completing the revised programme in the a reduced timescale.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the new window production machinery be purchased; and
- (2) that single glazed "timber plas" and aluminium windows be added to the end of the overall programme.

225. 2001/02 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - PERIOD 8

Councillor Patel submitted a report showing the summary position of the capital programme for 2001/02 up to the end of November (period 8).

The minutes of the Arts, Leisure, and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 18 February 2002, the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 20 February 2002 and the Social Services and Personal Health Scrutiny Committee on 21 February 2002 were circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that a revised level of programmed expenditure of £64.363 million, including rephasing of a further £2.583 million into 2002/03, be approved;
- (2) that the level of expenditure to the end of November 2001 of £31.878 million, be noted;
- (3) that the position relating to capital receipts, be noted;
- (4) that the use of £366,000 of monies for feasibility studies to be spent on project management costs associated with the cultural quarter, be approved; and
- (5) that the following additions to the capital programme be approved:-
 - Class size reduction initiative – £18,000, to be funded by an increase in specific grant funding.
 - Specialist college status in respect of Hamilton Community College and Sir Jonathan North School of £200,000 to be funded by specific grant.
 - Public Transport Interchange (PTI) £27,000, to be funded by an additional Supplementary Credit Approval.
 - Sure Start expenditure of £222,000 to be funded by additional sure start grant.

226. 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 Paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Paragraph 9

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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.

CITY CENTRE CCTV CONTROL ROOM STAFFING CONTRACT

227. CITY CENTRE CCTV CONTROL ROOM STAFFING CONTRACT

Councillor Subedar submitted a report informing the Cabinet of the action of the Director of Environment, Development and Commercial Services of waiving Standing Order 84 to enable a previous staffing contractor of the CCTV control room to be replaced by a temporarily appointed company from 1 November 2001 and of the tendering process being organised to appoint a company to staff the City Centre Control Room on a long term basis.

Members expressed an interest in exploring partnership opportunities for any future staffing of the CCTV City Centre Control Room.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the waiving of Standing 84 and the change in contractor be noted;
- (2) that the tender process be undertaken;
- (3) that the inclusion of a growth bid for CCTV in the departmental budget strategy, be noted.

228. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.50pm.