



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: THURSDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2002 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair  
Councillor Patel - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti  
Councillor Draycott  
Councillor Getliffe  
Councillor Holden

Councillor Kavia  
Councillor Osman  
Councillor Roberts  
Councillor Westley

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**114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked 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.

No declarations were made.

**115. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

East Midlands Royal Town Planning Institute Awards 2002

Councillor Willmott referred to the above awards and stated that in the Urban Regeneration category two Leicester projects had been jointly awarded the first prize. These were the Walkers Stadium and the National Space Centre. Councillor Willmott extended his congratulations and thanks to the Council staff involved.

**116. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Minute 103 (b) 'Items Referred from Scrutiny Committees – Internal Audit Annual Report of the Year'

Councillor Patel stated that he felt that the minute was incorrect when it stated that 'the Audit Commission had recommended that Scrutiny Committees take the lead role in monitoring audit reports as under the current arrangements being operated'. He requested that this wording be deleted and replaced by 'the District Auditor had recommended that a single committee take the lead in

monitoring audit reports and that the Council's current arrangements achieved this'.

RESOLVED:

that subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2002, having been circulated to Members, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **117. ITEMS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The Cabinet received the following item from the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee arising from its meeting on 17 October 2002:-

### THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF REGENERATION SERVICES

RESOLVED:

that Cabinet be requested to consider the retention of experienced staff in Regeneration Services and whether they felt there were sufficient arrangements to ensure this happened.

Councillor Kavia responded as follows:-

He had spoken to Members of the Scrutiny Committee and assured them that their concerns had been taken into account and that action had been taken in relation to Corporate and Service Directors. The issue would be further considered as part of the Best Value process but in the meantime the Council was doing well in terms of regeneration.

## **118. SCHOOLS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Councillor Roberts submitted a report which gave details of the requirement to produce a Schools Asset Management Plan for Department for Education and Skills approval. The Plan sought to show how the Council and schools fulfilled their stewardship requirements and how capital investment supported Council and Government priorities and helped to protect and improve standards.

It was noted that the plan reflected a major investment and illustrated the strategic approach taken. Schools would have a central role in the asset management process through the preparation of School Property Plans which would show the schools local priorities for investment. The Schools Reference Group had been consulted and had supported the Plan.

Members of the Cabinet welcomed in particular the plan for the replacement of mobile classrooms.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the Local Policy Statement and the Statement of Priorities be endorsed;

- (2) that the indicative Capital Programme as set out in Appendix A to the report, which would be funded from Government grants and credit approvals and other capital funds already approved by Cabinet, be approved;
- (3) that the implementation of the Capital Programme be delegated to the Corporate Director in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning; and
- (4) to note that the detailed phasing of the works had still to be established and the spend profile agreed as part of (3) above.

### **119. SCHOOL ADMISSION PROCEDURE CHANGES**

Councillor Roberts submitted a report which gave details of the annual consultation on school admission arrangements in respect of children in public care and children on the Child Protection Register and proposed changes to procedure.

In respect of children in the public care, changes were proposed to give these children priority for vacant places in over subscribed schools. For children on the Child Protection Register changes were proposed to priorities to allow children to avoid contact with an abuser. Changes were also proposed to comply with a recent High Court judgement against Newham Local Education Authority which had established the need for LEAs to give due consideration to parental religious conviction in the admissions procedure. It was also proposed to amend the guidance to parents to clarify the importance of stating the local priority area school as the first preference, in order to obtain a place there.

Cabinet Members felt that the application form may need to be amended to make it easier to understand and suggested that interested Cabinet members meet to suggest possible improvements, prior to its issue this year.

Members welcomed the attempt to ensure stability for children in the public care and on the Child Protection Register which had been recognised as a priority.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the outcome of the consultation be noted and approval given to Children in the Public Care being ranked 1<sup>st</sup> position in the oversubscription criteria for allocating places to oversubscribed schools and to children on the Child Protection Register being moved up the over subscription criteria from 5<sup>th</sup> place to 2<sup>nd</sup> place;
- (2) that the addition of 'religious conviction' as a new category within the oversubscription criteria and ranked 7<sup>th</sup>, ahead of 'distance from home to school' be approved;

- (3) that changes be made to the admissions guidance and application form, to enable parents/carers to be more aware of the consequences of failing to put their local priority school as their 1<sup>st</sup> preference be approved; and
- (4) that a meeting of interested Cabinet members be arranged to consider the application form and to suggest possible improvements prior to its issue.

## **120. LEICESTER WEST TRANSPORT SCHEME PROPOSAL**

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report which gave details of the concept, draft designs and latest assessment of the Scheme. The scheme which had been developed from the Central Leicestershire Strategic Transport Studies report sought to bring about a step change in the quality of public transport alternatives to the private car as well as benefiting road users through increased traffic flows. It was planned to begin consultation in November 2002 with the final detailed scheme brought to Cabinet in March 2003 before submission to Government. The costs of the scheme would be funded from 50% direct government grant and 50% Supplementary Credit Approvals, to be shared between the City and County Councils.

Members offered their thanks to the Members and staff involved in the project which was one of the biggest yet endorsed by Cabinet.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the draft designs be approved for consultation;
- (2) that the results of the consultation along with further detailed designs work and economic appraisal be reported to Cabinet in March 2003; and
- (3) that subject to successful consultation and economic appraisal a bid be prepared for submission to the Department for Transport.

## **121. ARRANGEMENTS FOR DELIVERY OF URBAN BUS CHALLENGE PROJECT**

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report which gave details of arrangements to deliver a community based bus service in the Braunstone area using Government grant funding under the Urban Bus Challenge programme and funding from the Braunstone Community Association. The bid had been endorsed by the Council which would be the Accountable Body. A project board had been appointed by the Council to fulfil its function as the Accountable Body. There would be a legal agreement between the City Council and the Braunstone Community Association detailing their obligations and including a provision that the Braunstone Community Association had an agreed exit strategy in place to address the situation at the conclusion of grant

funding.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the acceptance of Urban Bus Challenge funding, with Leicester City Council being the Accountable Body be endorsed;
- (2) that the arrangements that had been established to manage the project, and expenditure of the Grant funding on the project be approved; and
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Environment, Regeneration and Development be authorised to request the Head of Legal Services to arrange relevant Contracts and Agreements, between the City Council and Braunstone Community Association, regarding the delivery of the Urban Bus Challenge Project.

## **122. SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANNING, SAFER ROUTES STRATEGY, UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report which gave details of the implementation of Safer Routes Projects in the City and proposed a new order for implementing area wide projects and a protocol for assessing the transport impact of new schools and extensions to existing schools. Work had already commenced on the first two area wide schemes with the rest of the programme to be completed over 10 years.

Members welcomed the scheme and the improvements to road safety together with the aim, as part of the Safer Routes scheme, to reduce speed limits outside all schools.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the success of the Safer Routes schemes in Highfields and Evington be noted;
- (2) that progress in implementing other safer routes schemes in the city including the first two areas in the ten year strategy (North Braunstone/Rowley Fields and South Leicester) and projects associated with the Astill Lodge Road and Rushey Mead North traffic calming schemes be noted;
- (3) that in the light of the latest child pedestrian and cyclist casualty figures, the initial order of priority of areas be as follows:
  - 2003/2004 New Parks
  - 2004/2005 Humberstone, Thurncourt, Hamilton
  - 2005/2006 Stoneygate, Spinney Hill,

and that the following five areas be implemented as part of the ten year strategy: Abbey, Belgrave and Latimer, Fosse, Knighton, Westcotes and Western Park;

- (4) that the Safer Routes projects be developed as part of area wide traffic calming schemes where practicable;
- (5) that preference be given to schools within project areas that have already developed a School Travel Plan or are in the process of undertaking work which will result in the adoption of a School Travel Plan;
- (6) that the protocol set out in Appendix B for dealing with the transport impact of new schools and developments at schools be agreed; and
- (7) that the Service Director be authorised to use his Delegated Powers to alter the order for implementing the Safer Routes schemes in the light of changes in the pattern of child casualties.

#### **123. BEST VALUE REVIEW - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION, PRESENTATION OF FINAL REPORT**

Councillor Westley submitted a report which gave details of the final report of the Review which set out the strategic case for the provision of Highways and Transportation services, described the services provided, reported on the assessment of how services were performing and proposed an Improvement Plan to drive continuous improvement. The Review had received a 'fair' one star grading from inspectors with 'promising prospects for improvement' with the Councils good partnership arrangements highlighted. Work had already started on implementing the Improvement Plan with positive comments received in respect of the Star Track bus information system.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the report and Improvement Plan be approved; and
- (2) that the Best Value Inspectors' comments regarding the under-funding of highway maintenance be noted, in particular the low revenue spend compared to the Standard Spending Assessment, that 20% of the increased supplementary Credit Approval for the Local Transport Plan had been diverted to the Single Capital Pot and the bottom quartile performance related to the condition of both principal and non-principal roads and the significant public dissatisfaction with footways.

#### **124. ADVANCE DIRECTION SIGN, LUTTERWORTH ROAD**

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report which updated Cabinet on a petition with

regard to the proposed siting of a traffic sign on the A426 Lutterworth Road adjacent to Monsell Drive. The issue had been previously considered by the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee on 9 January 2002 and Cabinet on 29 July 2002. Following Cabinet's decision on 29 July to erect the sign in accordance with the advice of officers, a 'five Member' objection had been received and the matter referred to Council on 26 September 2002. An amendment was agreed by Council moved by Councillor Mrs Middleton and seconded by Councillor Mrs Chambers, that the 'advance direction sign on the A426 Lutterworth Road be erected closer to Aylestone Village on the hill part way between Plantation Avenue and Monsell Drive' and in doing so referred the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration and decision in the light of the amendment and associated professional advice from officers. Further to the report, a further letter had been received from the lead petitioner. This referred largely to the environmental impact of the sign. Councillor Mrs Middleton had also contacted officers and referred to the issue she raised at Council that there was only one lane for going straight ahead to Blaby and that she had referred in her objections to pressing for a review of Department of Transport guidelines on the erection of such signs.

Officers stated that the configuration of the junction with only one lane for going ahead and one for turning was not unique and was in fact a common layout. With regard to Mr Porter's letter, it was stated that the background of the sign would be grey and the proposed location was considered to be the optimum location from an environmental point of view. Officers were also of the view that current Department of Transport guidelines were adequate. The further representations and the amendment from Council did not therefore affect the officer's advice on the recommended location of the sign.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the petitioners' concerns be noted;
- (2) that the proposed actions of the Director to site an advance direction sign on the A426 Lutterworth Road adjacent to the junction with Monsell Drive be approved;
- (3) that it be agreed that the proposed refuge would be prioritised in accordance with the approved procedure and implemented when funds were available; and
- (4) that the petitioners be informed accordingly.

#### **125. GILROES CEMETRY EXTENSION - APPROVAL FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Councillor Holden submitted a report which gave details of a proposal to spend the capital funding of £200,000 allocated in the 2002/03 capital programme to support extension works to the cemetery which in addition to providing further burial space would improve drainage, landscaping and visitor facilities.

It was stated that a planting programme was being undertaken to screen the

cemetery from adjoining properties. Further information would be provided to Cabinet Members concerning the level of information which had been given to developers when proposing the nearby new developments.

RESOLVED:

that the request for capital funding of £200,000 be approved in order to carry out the necessary urgent works at Gilroes Cemetery, as identified within the report.

#### **126. SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE- INSPECTION OF MANAGEMENT AND USE OF INFORMATION IN SOCIAL CARE**

Councillor Getliffe submitted a report which gave details of the recent Social Services Inspectorate report on the management and use of information in the Social Care and Health Directorate which would contribute to the service's star rating in 2002/03. He also drew attention to the Directorate Action Plan responding to the report's 30 recommendations. It was stated that the report was positive and had found improvements since the Joint Review in 1999.

Members welcomed the report and gave thanks to staff for their hard work.

RESOLVED:

that the Social Services Inspectorate report be received and the Action Plan agreed.

#### **127. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF CRITERIA**

Councillor Patel submitted a report which gave details of a proposed update to the current discretionary rate relief policy. It was stated that the change represented a technical amendment which removed possible ambiguities which the existing criteria could create.

RESOLVED:

that the amended policy detailed in the supporting information to the report be approved.

#### **128. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2002/2003 - PERIOD 5**

Councillor Patel submitted a report which gave details of the summary position at the end of period 5 comparing spending with the budget for General Fund services which showed that by the end of the period 39% of revised budgets had been spent. It was stated that the report used the old departmental structures but that future reports would be based around the revised structures. Departments faced a variety of pressures with the Social Services budget under particular pressure which was also reflected nationally.

Members thanked Scrutiny Committees for their comments and acknowledged the difficulties faced by Social Services. Representations had been made to Central Government with regard to Social Services funding and next year's settlement was still awaited. It was noted that the grant settlement was



expected to be particularly late this year and Cabinet thanked Scrutiny Committees for their forbearance if budget details were provided later than usual.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the changes made to the original approved budget for 2002/03 be noted;
- (2) that the expenditure to date and the budgetary issues which had emerged so far this year be noted;
- (3) that the proposals put forward to ensure that spending was contained within departments' budgets be noted; and
- (4) that the establishment of a new reserve in the Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal department be authorised.

## **129. 2002/03 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - PERIOD 5**

Councillor Patel submitted a report which updated Cabinet on the progress of the capital programme up to the end of period 5. Expenditure at the end of the period represented 22.4% of the projected spend against 23.6% in the same period in 2001/02. It was stated that a number of improvements had been made to assist the management of the programme including milestone information, and regular meetings of the officer group.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that a revised level of programmed expenditure of £69.861 million be approved;
- (2) that the level of expenditure to the end of August 2002 of £15.690 million be noted;
- (3) that the position relating to capital receipts be noted; and
- (4) that the following additions to the capital programme be approved:-

### **Education**

- £477,500 as an increased allocation for Condition Focused Capital;
- £1,031,850 as grants to improve facilities at Fullhurst Community College as part of the New Opportunity Fund programme;
- £3,202,000 as grants for work at eight primary schools under the Space for Sports and Arts Initiative;
- £135,000 additional slippage from 2001/02 for

Devolved Formula Grants to schools, identified following final reconciliation to schools' accounting records;

- £279,000 as part of the Sports Lottery funding for the construction and development of Highfields Youth and Community Centre;
- £91,000 as a grant from the Learning and Skills Council for improvements to the Adult and Community Learning provision.

**Social Care**

- £137,000 for adaptations to improve childrens' mobility as part of Neighbourhood Renewal funds;
- £102,000 as an additional SCA for Mental Health projects;
- £160,000 grant from the Department of Health for Information Management;
- £86,000 for IT for the Looked after Children Project, also in the form of a DoH grant.

**Environment and Regeneration**

- £95,000 for Air Pollution monitoring and dispersion;
- £588,000 as additional funding for the Real Time Information scheme;
- £65,000 as grants for Gypsy Site Refurbishment.
- £239,000 additional Single Regeneration Budget funding;

**130. CENTRAL MAINTENANCE FUND- AUTHORISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Councillor Patel submitted a report which gave details of a proposal to authorise the release of capital monies to the Central Maintenance Fund for works to three schools and for the pilot refurbishment of toilets at the New Walk Centre.

RESOLVED:

that the release of the allocated funds of £350,000 within the Capital programme to the Central Maintenance Fund for the implementation of the works be approved.

**131. PRIVATE SESSION**

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the following report in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, because it involved the likely disclosure of 'exempt' information, as defined in the Paragraphs detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Paragraph 7

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

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.

CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE – 5-A- SIDE FOOTBALL CENTRE

**132. CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL CENTRE**

Councillor Roberts submitted a report recommending that the Council enter into a lease for the provision of the 5-A-Side Football Centre.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that approval in principle be given to the proposal to develop a 5-a-side football centre at Crown Hills Community College, subject to any such development being granted planning consent;
- (2) that the use of general consent to dispose of assets for 'the provision of recreational facilities' be authorised;
- (3) that the Service Director – Corporate Property in consultation with the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning be authorised to negotiate with the Goals Soccer Centres Limited for the lease of approximately 4 acres of land for an agreement to secure certain free use of the facilities for the College and the local community;
- (4) that the Town Clerk be authorised to enter into a lease agreement to provide certain free use of the facilities, subject to rental being set at market value and subject to satisfactory terms being agreed that would protect the Council's financial interests; and
- (5) that it be directed that the initial premium and the annual income arising from the lease (both net of administrative expenses) be passed to Crown Hills Community College on condition that this is used for the sole purpose of developing sporting opportunities for local schools.

**133. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 5.46pm.

