



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2002 at 4.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Willmott - Chair
Councillor Patel - Vice-Chair

Councillor Bhatti
Councillor Draycott
Councillor Getliffe

Councillor Osman
Councillor Roberts
Councillor Westley

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97. 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.

No declarations were made.

98. PROPOSED NATIONAL FRONT MARCH - 28 SEPTEMBER 2002

The Town Clerk submitted a report informing the Cabinet that a letter had been received by the Chief Constable, written on behalf of the National Front, submitting a formal application for permission to hold a march in Leicester on Saturday 28 March 2002. In particular the letter sought permission to hold an "Anti-Islam march" and protest "to continue their national campaign to highlight the dangers posed by Islamic extremists living within our communities". The National Front anticipated that the march would attract between 50-200 demonstrators, for which they had given an undertaking to provide adequate stewards on the day. The proposal was to march from the railway station to the Clock Tower, where a demonstration was proposed for approximately one hour. The organisers then intended for the Group to reassemble outside or near to the Leicester City Football Ground (where Leicester City would be playing Wolverhampton Wanderers) and distribute leaflets in the pre-match build up, prior to leaving Leicester when the match began.

The Cabinet noted that experience elsewhere and the organisers' own estimate indicated that the number of people supporting the march was likely to be up to 200. In addition, there may be people wishing to express their opposition to the march in even greater numbers. These could be in part those who favoured

direct action.

It was noted that any ban would need to be initiated by the Police, who would then need to make an application to the City Council. The City Council would then need to decide if it wished to apply to the Secretary of State for his consent to the Council making the appropriate Order.

The report detailed the powers and duties by which the Chief Constable could instigate an application and the control measures that he could impose on any public processions. Appendix A to the report also detailed the Human Rights implications.

It was noted that the Acting Chief Constable was currently seeking views from communities across the City and was also gathering information regarding the proposed march and possible counter demonstrations and protests, prior to forming a view. A meeting was currently taking place at Police Headquarters where the matter was being discussed. A decision had not yet been reached but it was hoped that a decision would be forthcoming before the end of the day. The Cabinet therefore agreed to adjourn until 4.45pm.

The Cabinet adjourned until 4.45pm

The Cabinet reconvened and noted that it was now anticipated that there would not be a decision from the Police today. However, it was noted that the timescales were very tight for the Council to apply to the Secretary of State, if the Police did apply for a ban. It was agreed therefore, that in the event of an application from the Police, authority to apply to the Secretary of State should be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the relevant legal powers and duties be noted; and
- (2) that the Town Clerk be authorised, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to make an Order, with the consent of the Secretary of State, to prohibit any march arising from an application by the Acting Chief Constable.

99. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 4.53 pm.