



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 10 MARCH 2003 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

\* \* \* \* \*

**210. 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.

Councillor Willmott declared a non-prejudicial interest in report G, 'Leicester Promotions Limited' as a Council appointed Director of Leicester Promotions Ltd.

**211. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Willmott reported that the 'Supporting People' Shadow Strategy was 1 of only 14% nationally that was graded excellent. He gave congratulations to all the Officers involved in its production.

Councillor Willmott also noted that the Tourist Information Office had been shortlisted for a Tourism award and congratulated the staff involved.

**212. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2003, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**213. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The Cabinet received the following items from the Arts Leisure and Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 12 February 2003 and the Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee held on 19 February 2003.

**ARTS, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 FEBRUARY 2003**

(i) REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2002/2003

RESOLVED:

- (2) that the Committee's concerns regarding one-off festivals and events and the suggestion that a budget be provided to underwrite any possible future shortfalls be passed to Cabinet.

Councillor Patel responded that there was no dedicated budget for this eventuality, however there was an expectation that festivals and events would balance income with expenditure, which included meeting health and safety requirements. He commented that it was too late to influence this year's revenue budget strategy and he did not in any case feel it was necessary to change the Council's policy on this issue.

Councillor Willmott endorsed this view and emphasised that it was expected that Departments should contain overspends within their budgets.

**FINANCE RESOURCES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19 FEBRUARY 2003**

(ii) HEATING AND VENTILATION AT WELFORD HOUSE

RESOLVED:

- that the Committee urge Cabinet to identify the future use of the building and allocate sufficient resources as a matter of urgency to enable the situation to be rectified so that the Council's responsibility as an employer can be met.

Councillor Patel responded that there were a number of options for use of the building being investigated as part of the review of Centrally Located Administrative Buildings. All of these had a number of different financial implications. There would be report submitted to Cabinet later on in the year to consider these options.

(iii) CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2002/2003 – PERIOD 8

RESOLVED:

- that the Committee ask the Cabinet to look again at the £19,000 savings from the highways maintenance to see if alternative ways of making up the shortfall could be found from elsewhere in the department.

Councillor Patel responded that it had been agreed to utilise the resources from the Highways Maintenance Capital Budget 2002/03 and from the Environment, Regeneration and Development Capital Programme to make up for the overspend of the bridge programme. £59,000 would then be repaid to the Highway Maintenance budget in 2003/04 and it was felt that this budget could contain the £19,000.

#### **214. ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2003/2004**

Councillor Draycott submitted a report summarising the proposed programme of environmental works in the previously declared Renewal Areas for 2003/2004.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the proposed environmental works in renewal areas as shown in detail in paragraph 1, appendix 1 of the report, be approved;
- (2) that the proposed programme of works for the Environment Task Force (New Deal Rear Wall Scheme) in North Belgrave Renewal Area Phase 2, as show in appendix 2 of the report, be approved; and
- (3) that all owners that benefit from the New Deal Rear Walls Scheme make a flat rate contribution of £150 towards the overall cost of skips used and for the work cabins provided on site.

#### **215. PRIVATE HOUSING RENEWAL STRATEGY - REFORMS**

Councillor Draycott submitted a report which detailed the new freedoms given to local authorities by the Government to develop local approaches to renovation grants, home repair grants, renewal areas and any other form of assistance to owners of private housing which would improve, repair or adapt their homes.

Councillor Draycott specifically referred to a number of features proposed as part of these new freedoms. These included a change to the means test to enable more low-income households to benefit from the schemes; the period within which the Council could claw monies back should recipients of grants sell the property was to be extended and the fact that Landlords would not be able to receive grants.

The relevant minutes extract of the Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 13 February 2003 were circulated with the report. Councillor Draycott noted they were supportive of the new strategy direction.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the broad strategy for improving private housing on an

area basis be continued and unless otherwise specified the general rules governing the current grant provision and general policies adopted also be continued;

- (2) that policy changes outlined in Appendix 1 as summarised below, be approved subject to consultation,
  - i) renovation Grants be replaced with Home Improvement Grants
  - ii) the means test for Home Improvement Grants be changed so as to make it payable to more low income households
  - ii) the grant be repayable on a sliding scale if the house is sold within 10 years
  - iii) the citywide Home Maintenance Service to complete the current two year programme
  - iv) consideration be given, when the capital programme is agreed each year to making provision for conversions, extensions and landlord grants
  - v) a discretionary Adapted Alternative Home Grant be introduced, payable where moving to a new home would be more cost effective than paying a Disabled Facilities Grant
  - vi) new loan products would be explored with financial institutions;
- (3) that while the policies outlined in the report guide the provision of the described discretionary services in general, all valid applications be considered on their individual circumstances and merit and that the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised, in exceptional cases, to approve applications outside of the general policy;
- (4) that consultation be undertaken with those parties listed in Appendix 2 of the report with a view to implementation on 1 July 2003;
- (5) that once the policy has been agreed any future major changes be brought to Cabinet for decision but the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised to make any minor changes to the policy;
- (6) that an annual report monitoring the policy be submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee; and
- (7) that a common point of access and marketing strategy be developed for assistance to homeowners with repairs, home energy, security and safety work.

## **216. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: SOUTH HIGHFIELDS CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT**

Councillor Kavia submitted a report detailing a proposed South Highfields Conservation Area Character Statement. It was noted that Character Statements were prepared in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 15, Planning and the Historic Environment, to identify those factors which made a conservation area an area of special architectural and historical interest.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the South Highfields Conservation Area Character Statement as attached to the report be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan;
- (2) that the deletion of Churchill Street, Connaught Street and Hamilton Street from the South Highfields Conservation Area and the area covered by the South Highfields Conservation Area Article 4 Direction, be approved;
- (3) that the deletion of Nos. 1a and 1-21 Welland Street from the area covered by the South Highfields Article 4 Direction, be approved

## **217. A NEW STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Councillor Kavia submitted a report which set out proposals for a new International Development Strategy and how this should be approached by the Council and its partners in future.

The minutes of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2003 were circulated with the report. Councillor Kavia noted they were supportive of the strategy.

### **RESOLVED:**

that the Cabinet approve the new International Development Strategy which set out a new strategic framework for the Council's international activities and aimed to move the authority away from its traditional civic approach to trans-national technical partnership working, which reflected:-

- external funding opportunities,
- linkages with mainstream programmes and policies,
- a shift towards trans-national technical partnership working,
- the need to co-ordinate international development work corporately and to encourage greater involvement in the corporate Overseas Links Working Party by all service areas.

## **218. HAMILTON DISTRICT CENTRE - PROVISION OF A COMMUNITY HALL AND LIBRARY**

Councillor Patel submitted a report seeking Cabinet approval in principle to the funding and provision of a community hall and library at the Hamilton District Centre.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the GPI "offer" be agreed as the preferred option to provide the community hall and library and officers begin detailed negotiations;
- (2) that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, be authorised to agree the detailed terms for the construction of the community hall and library, including the agreement on the size and specification of the building, based on the best deal negotiable;
- (3) that, in the event of negotiations with GPI leading to an agreement being reached, then contract procedure rules 6 and 7 be waived;
- (4) that the principle of funding revenue costs through a combination of measures, as described in paragraph 1.4.2 of the Supporting Information document, be accepted;
- (5) that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Education, be asked to bring forward to Cabinet during the two year transitional period, worked up proposals designed to achieve a fully funded facility at the end of that period.

## **219. LEICESTER PROMOTIONS LIMITED**

Councillor Patel submitted a report which formed the basis of a new contract between the Council and Leicester Promotions Ltd from 1 April 2003, the existing contract expiring at 31 March 2003.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the new contract with Leicester Promotions Limited be for five years in line with the planning horizon of the Visitor Development Strategy approved by Cabinet last year;
- (2) that the new contract include indicative funding levels for each of the five years within the contract, subject to the necessary caveats allowing annual flexibility;
- (3) that a revised specification be approved aligning the

Council's expectations of Leicester Promotions more closely to the delivery of the agreed Visitor Development Strategy over the five year period 2003/04 – 2007/08;

- (4) that the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Head of Communications be authorised to finalise and enter into an appropriate contract with Leicester Promotions Ltd.

## **220. BEST VALUE REVIEW - HERITAGE SERVICES - FINAL REPORT**

Councillor Westley submitted a report presenting the final report of a cross thematic Best Value Review which looked at all Heritage Services strategically and the Museums Service in depth. The report summarised the findings of the review and recommended strategic directions for both areas and a detailed improvement plan.

Councillor Holden commented that recommendation 15 of the summary of recommendations contained within the Supporting Information effectively meant the closure of Jewry Wall Museum. He personally did not support this and had received support for his position from members of the public. He therefore proposed that implementation proposals in the report be approved but that there be future reports to Cabinet on the proposals.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the strategic principles that directed the report, as follows, be approved:-
  - I) the need for strategic co-ordination of heritage issues across the Council
  - ii) the need to engage all the communities of Leicester in museums and heritage and to increase visitor numbers and participation, particularly by traditionally excluded groups,
  - iii) the need to deliver a more customer oriented service,
  - iv) the delivery of a focused service, prioritising relevance to and engagement with the communities of Leicester,
  - v) the requirement for the service to identify a 2% efficiency saving and the investment of that saving; and
- (2) that the detailed implementation proposals in the Supporting Information be noted and the Cabinet receive reports on each of the implementation proposals and their implications.

## **221. BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW OF THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICE: SCOPING REPORT**

Councillor Westley submitted a report setting out proposals for the scoping of the Best Value Service Review of the Housing Management Service and detailing the preparations to be undertaken prior to the formal inspection in April 2004.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the service areas to be included in the Best Value Review of the Housing Management Service as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved; and
- (2) that a performance management based approach for the review as detailed in Appendix 1, be approved.

## **222. TREASURY STRATEGY 2003/2004**

Councillor Patel submitted a report recommending a Treasury Strategy for 2003/2004.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Strategy in respect of borrowing, investment, use of fund managers, consultants, leasing, debt rescheduling and repayment, as described in the Supporting Information, be adopted;
- (2) that Council be recommended to adopt the borrowing limits as detailed in 5.1 of the strategy;
- (3) that the lending list attached as appendix B to the report, be adopted.

## **223. REVISED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2001/02**

Councillor Patel submitted a report presenting the changes made to the draft accounts following their audit by the District Auditor.

RESOLVED:

that the revised Statement of Accounts for 2001/02 be noted.

## **224. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

### **BRAUNSTONE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CENTRE**

The Chair agreed to take this report as an item of urgent business. The reason for urgency was that a decision was required to ensure the progression of the construction of the Health and Social Care centre to meet timescales agreed with the Braunstone Community Association, the Government Office for the East Midlands and the Primary Care Trust.



## 225. 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 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

PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

PROVISION OF A DOCTORS SURGERY AT HAMILTON DISTRICT CENTRE

BRAUNSTONE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CENTRE

#### Paragraph 7

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

GORSE HILL HOSPITAL AND NHS SOCIAL CARE HOMES REPROVISION PROJECT

## 226. PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Councillor Holden submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's consideration of the proposed options for the funding and design of the new Performing Arts Centre.

### RESOLVED:

- (1) that it be reaffirmed that the Cultural Quarter is the Council's most significant medium term priority for capital investment;
- (2) that development of the Performing Arts Centre be continued at risk and the recommended £31.5 million design and funding option, be approved;
- (3) that proceeding to the procurement stage, be dependant upon achievement of certain specified funding, as detailed in the report;

- (4) that it be ensured that the risk of unbudgeted cost falling on the Council is managed by:-
- i) maintaining a contingency of £0.9million in the capital programme,
  - ii) continuing to keep reserved schemes “on hold” (other than the £0.5 million approved for housing purposes) until such time as the Council knows the risk has expired,
  - iii) setting aside a further £2million by assuming £1 million slippage into the capital programme 2005/06 to 2007/08, and assuming additional receipts of £1 million in the first year of that programme,
  - iv) considering in the last resort, changing the Council’s commitment to rolling programmes with effect from 2004/05 with the exception of the monies set aside for the Disability Discrimination Act; removing the commitment to provide £750,000 and £100,000 to the housing and transport programmes respectively in 2004/05 (being additional to the 80% of notional Single Capital Pot resources they retain automatically); and varying the 20% of sums notionally allocated for transport in 2004/05 which are available for corporate priorities;
- (5) that a report be received at a later date, on the Performing Arts Centre, to approve the funding package, procurement route, contractor and timetable for its construction;
- (6) that the sale of Council land and property holdings up to a value of £5.4 million, and the use of income from these sales for the Performing Arts Centre project, be approved and that the budget of Environment, Regeneration and Development be compensated by £160,000 per annum for loss of revenue income;
- (7) that the Corporate Director of Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal, in consultation with the Cabinet Members Working Group, be authorised to sign off of the Project Definition Document required to complete Stage 2 of the Major Projects Management Standards;
- (8) that the Corporate Director of Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal, in consultation with the Cabinet Members Working Group, be authorised to approve the appointment of ‘second wave’ consultants, for input into

the design development work up to RIBA Stage E and that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into the appropriate contracts;

- (9) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into the appropriate contracts to progress construction of the Creative Industries Workspaces project subject to final confirmation of the funding package.

## **227. PROVISION OF A DOCTORS SURGERY AT HAMILTON DISTRICT CENTRE**

Councillor Patel submitted a report seeking approval in principle to various disposals regarding the 1.2 acres of community land at Hamilton District Centre.

RESOLVED:

that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.

## **228. GORSE HILL HOSPITAL AND NHS SOCIAL CARE HOMES REPROVISION PROJECT**

Councillor Getliffe submitted a report updating the Cabinet on the progress of joint work on the Gorse Hill Hospital and NHS Social Care Homes Reprovision Project.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the progress on the work undertaken to date in relation to the 'Gorse Hill Reprovision Project';
- (2) that the Corporate Director of Social Care and Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Social Services and Personal Health, be authorised to :-
  - i) approve the detailed financial and legal agreement required between the City Council, Primary Care Trusts and the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust to enable the City Council to take on lead commissioning for the project; and
  - ii) approve the care and support contracts for all the phases of the project, following a competitive tendering process, the value of which will be in excess of Chief Officers delegated authority;
  - iii) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to sign the relevant contract or contracts.

**229. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS - BRAUNSTONE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CENTRE**

Councillor Patel submitted a report updating the Cabinet on progress in the negotiations to dispose of 1.2 hectares of land on Hockley Farm Road by way of a 125 year premium and peppercorn lease to the Braunstone Community Association.

Councillor Westley requested that his opposition to this decision be noted in the minutes.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the land at Hockley Farm Road be disposed on the basis of a 125 year lease for a premium as detailed in the report and a peppercorn rent thereafter; and
- (2) that the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Resources be authorised to agree the terms of the sale.

**230. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.