



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: TUESDAY, 22 APRIL 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

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271. 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 Act 1972 applied to them.

There were no declarations.

272. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

As this was the last Cabinet meeting before the forthcoming elections, Councillor Willmott thanked his Cabinet colleagues for their support over the past two years since the Cabinet had been in existence. He also thanked all the Officers who had supported the work of the Cabinet.

273. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2003, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

274. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred from Scrutiny Committees.

275. LEICESTER WEST TRANSPORT SCHEME PROPOSAL

Councillor Bhatti submitted a report seeking approval to submit jointly with Leicestershire County Council, a bid for Major Scheme funding to the Department for Transport, to fund the Leicester West Transport Scheme. The scheme involves the provision of public transport infrastructure and services to serve the area of the north, west and south of central Leicestershire, including three 'park and ride' sites in Aylestone, Birstall and Glenfield. There had been 48 sites assessed for the provision of 'park and ride' and three had been chosen.

Councillor Bhatti noted that consultation had been undertaken on the scheme. He commented that there was opposition to the 'park and rides' from those residents who lived in the close vicinity of the proposed sites. He also commented that there had been support for the proposals from those people consulted who were potential users of the facility. He also stated he was confident that any adverse effects arising from the schemes could be alleviated.

Councillor Willmott stated that he had met with the Ward Councillors and residents before the meeting and outlined briefly for the meeting a number of the points that were raised. He requested that these be responded to in the further report to be submitted to Cabinet. He also stated that representations could be made to the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee when they considered the matter. The points raised, included the following:-

- Would the scheme pass the test for funding?
- A previous scheme was submitted, why did this fail?
- Could the results of the Biodiversity study be made available?
- A number of points had been raised in a petition to Council.
- What was the basis of need in view of the development in the City centre?
- What would happen to City centre car parking?
- What was the definite timetable of the scheme?
- The impact on traffic overall in the City.

Councillor Willmott also asked for clarification on the timescale needed for a decision.

The Service Director, Highways and Transportation responded that he felt that the report did cover the points raised by the Ward Councillors and residents. However, if there were any aspects that were not covered, he would ensure they were addressed in the further report to Cabinet. With regard to whether the scheme would fulfil the criteria for funding he recommended that the submission of the scheme would test this. With reference to the decision timetable, he stated there was an annual funding round for such schemes and if the application was not made by 31 July 2003, the Councils would have to wait a further year. In addition, opportunities for this type of funding were decreasing.

The Service Director also confirmed, in response to a question from the Chair, that none of the issues raised above, would cause him to change the recommendations in the report.

The minutes of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March were attached to the report.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the City Council, in partnership with the County Council, submit a bid for Major Scheme funding to the Department for Transport to fund the Leicester West Transport Scheme, as described in Section 2 of the report, subject to recommendation 3 below;
- (2) that the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee be requested to comment on the report prior to its further consideration by Cabinet.
- (3) that a further report be brought before Cabinet no later than July 2003, confirming the final details of the bid, including resource implications and detailing the share of risk and benefits between the City and County Councils, on the basis that no 'call-in' of the decision may then be made, because of technical reasons and timescales required as outlined in Section 11 of the report.

276. TRANSFORMING SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Councillor Roberts submitted a report advising the Cabinet of progress to date in taking forward the Transforming Secondary Schools agenda and in particular, the proposals for three possible new schools. The report explained the context of the evolving national and local agenda for raising standards and other strategic objectives and considered the two consultancy reports.

With regard to the City Academy, he commented that a set of principles had been established for this school and sponsors had been sought on this basis. Two sponsors had come forward, the Church of England and a consortium of local businesses. The consultants report had highlighted more potential benefits than weaknesses in the proposals and Councillor Roberts detailed these briefly.

With regard to the Islamic Academy, he felt that further details were needed before a decision could be taken on this proposal and he recommended that a further report be submitted which considered whether the proposed school would meet the set of principles which had been established by the Local Education Authority.

In reference to the proposed Key Stage 3 school in West Leicester, he felt that this did not represent a realistic opportunity that would achieve Government funding. However he did request that the Director of Education produce a report to show how standards in that area could be raised.

The minutes of the Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee held

on 7 April 2003 were circulated to the Cabinet. Councillor Roberts noted the views of the Committee differed to those of the Cabinet except with regard to the Key Stage 3 school in West Leicester.

Councillor Roberts also circulated an amended recommendation to 2.1(a) of the report.

In response to Councillor Draycott, Councillor Roberts said that formal consultation on the city academy would not begin until after the summer holidays by which time detailed plans would have been drawn up.

The Chair commented that these proposals had been under discussion for over a year and the arguments had been exhaustively rehearsed and many people, himself included, were persuaded of the benefits of the proposal to children of Leicester.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that approval and support be given for a City Academy in the Saffron and Eyres Monsell area and that formal consultation on this proposal begin as soon as practicable;
- (2) that the application of the Islamic Academy for Voluntary Aided status be subject to a full and detailed report, which considered the Academy's views on the Council's principles and their views on teaching and other Trades Unions and in addition, the impact that this provision would have on community cohesion in the City, this report to be prepared for consideration by the Cabinet at its July 2003 meeting;
- (3) that the idea of providing a Key Stage 3 school for West Leicester on the former Wycliffe site be discontinued, but that the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning be asked to prepare a report on how improvements could be made to the provision of education in West Leicester;
- (4) that, arising from resolutions above, it be requested that more detailed proposals, capable of statutory consultation and with a detailed assessment of the issues raised to date, be developed:
 - having clarified outstanding issues with the DfES and sponsors;
 - having had further discussion with a stakeholder group, the Education Partnership Board and sponsors in the context of the emerging Schools Strategy;
 - having regard to the possibilities arising from a potential Building Schools for the Future bid;

- following further discussions with local communities in conjunction with 'sponsors'; and
- (5) that officers be requested to pursue a bid to the DfES for funding under the DfES Building Schools for the Future programme, should it be confirmed by the DfES and to progress this in conjunction with the above stakeholder group.

277. PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT

Councillor Roberts submitted a report advising the Cabinet on a number of key strategic issues facing the primary school sector in the City. There had also been a number of amalgamation requests from school governing bodies to become 'all-through' primary schools and the report responded to them.

Councillor Roberts acknowledged the need for a citywide primary school review. However in the meantime it was necessary to respond to individual requests for amalgamations.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the pressing needs of amalgamation requests in the south of the city, be addressed;
- (2) that the principles under which this report had been prepared, as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report, be noted;
- (3) that statutory consultation be progressed at Rolleston Infant and Juniors Schools in May 2003;
- (4) the higher level of capital funding set out in the report, be agreed in principle, subject to the views of the Schools Forum, with the final decision being taken by the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Education;
- (5) that the future of Southfields Infants and Newry Junior schools be seen within the context of the decision to approve the City Academy;
- (6) that officers continue to assess the available options for Queensmead Infants and Juniors, and for Braunstone Frith Infants and Juniors; and
- (7) to note that, where proposals were going forward, the Education and Lifelong Learning Department would develop a range of options for possible remodelling or use of redundant buildings including wider community use and

potential advantages accruing to the Council of land sale.

278. LIFELONG LEARNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC COMMUNITY LEARNING PLAN

Councillor Roberts submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's approval for the Strategic Community Learning Plan for recommendation to Council. It was noted that the Plan had been prepared following extensive consultation with the service, with partners and stakeholders.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Strategic Community Learning Plan of the Lifelong Learning and Community Development Division be approved for recommendation to Council; and
- (2) that a further report be produced on a budget strategy for the Lifelong Learning and Community Development Division.

279. MULTI DISCIPLINARY CENTRE - POCKLINGTON'S WALK

Councillor Draycott submitted a report about the creation of a new, innovative centre for homeless people and guidance was sought from the Cabinet whether and how the scheme should proceed.

Councillor Draycott noted that the Housing Scrutiny Committee had given their support to this proposal and thanked them for their support. She also noted that Government consideration of listed building consent was still awaited.

The Chair wished to record his support for the proposal.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the planning approval by the Regulatory Committee on the 2 April 2003, be noted;
- (2) that the scheme be added to the Housing Capital Programme 2003/04 and 2004/05;
- (3) that when the new facility was complete, the existing Nightshelter be closed and sold, with the capital receipt being used to offset the purchase / refurbishment costs of the new facility on Pocklington's Walk;
- (4) that the Corporate Director of Housing be authorised to:-
 - a) appoint a Project Manager to implement the scheme,
 - b) agree and authorise capital expenditure for the scheme,
 - c) dispose of the existing Nightshelter upon completion

of the scheme;

- (5) that the Town Clerk be authorised to sign any contracts and any other necessary documentation in connection with the scheme.

280. NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND - YEARS 4 & 5 OVERALL TIMETABLE AND PART ONE PROCESS

Councillor Draycott submitted a report on the review of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund processes in years 2 and 3 carried out by a Leicester Partnership Review Group and on proposals for processes in years 4 and 5.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the principles agreed by the Leicester Partnership, the timetable and the role of the Thematic Partnerships, the Co-ordinating Group and the Leicester Partnership, be endorsed; and
- (2) that the Council have the role of:-
 - approving Part One of the Prospectus that sets out the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Process,
 - approving Part Two of the Prospectus that will be issued in July 2003, and will set out the provisional priorities for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund,
 - approving Part Three of the Prospectus that will be issued in November 2003, and will set out the final, agreed priorities for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund,
 - approving the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund programmes for 2004 and 2005.

281. REPLACEMENT CITY OF LEICESTER LOCAL PLAN

Councillor Kavia submitted a report on the main changes being proposed to the Local Plan as a result of public consultation on the first Deposit Plan (October 2001) and other important studies which had been completed over the last year, most significantly the Leicester Regeneration Company's Masterplan.

The minutes of the Development Control Sub-Committee held on March 18 2003 and the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 26 March 2003 were attached to the report.

Councillors Getliffe and Westley expressed their opposition to the proposal for housing on the Blackbird Road playing fields. They both felt, as ward Councillors, that there was a lack of community facilities in the area and that they would be more appropriate for the site.

An amended timetable for the production of the Plan was circulated to Cabinet Members.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the representations received to the first Deposit Draft Replacement Leicester Local Plan, be noted;
- (2) that the proposed action on late objections be noted;
- (3) that Council be recommended to approve the main changes proposed to the second Deposit Draft Local Plan;
- (4) that Council be recommended to approve the amended Local Plan timetable as circulated at the Cabinet meeting.

282. CORPORATE EQUALITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Councillor Osman submitted a report informing the Cabinet about the new Corporate Equality Strategy and action plan which aimed to provide a strategic focus for the authority to support the mainstreaming of equalities across all levels of service delivery, customer care and policy development.

Councillor Osman noted that since the reports production, external validation on it confirmed that the Council had achieved level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. The Validators made a number of recommendations to achieve level 3 of the award. He moved a further recommendation to include in the strategy, additional text on the Impact and Needs Assessment in response to the request from the External Validators.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Equality Strategy and Action Plan as attached to the report, be approved;
- (2) that the Equal Opportunities Statement and Commitments as set out in Section Two of the document, be approved;
- (3) that the points discussed in Section 4 of the document and Section 6 of the cover report be approved;
- (4) that an annual equality action plan be produced over the three year period of the strategy to inform the prioritisation of resources against agreed targets; and
- (5) that additional text be inserted in the document on Impact and Needs Assessment, in response to the request from the External Validators for the Local Government Equality Standard, prior to the final document being printed and distributed to staff, members and other partners and stakeholders.

283. TRADING ORGANISATIONS - 2003/2004 BUDGETS

Councillor Patel submitted a report in accordance with Finance Procedure Rules, presenting the budgets for the Council's trading organisations.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the 2003/2004 budgets for the trading organisations be approved;
- (2) that the action proposed on policies in respect of the use of any retained surpluses, be noted.

284. WAIVER OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

Councillor Patel submitted a report informing the Cabinet of Waivers to Contract Procedure Rules approved by the Town Clerk as required by paragraph 2.2(b) of those rules.

RESOLVED:

that the waivers to the Contract Procedure Rules be noted.

285. LEASES OF JUBILEE FAMILY CENTRE AND ST. PETERS FAMILY CENTRE FOR SURE START PURPOSES

Councillor Patel submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's approval to the lettings of the Jubilee Family Centre and the St. Peters Family Centre for Sure Start purposes in accordance with the previously agreed reconfiguration of family support services.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that approval be given to agreements for lease and 25 year leases at £1 per annum annual rental upon full repairing terms with a tenants break on the 7th anniversary and thereafter to:-
 - NCH in respect of Jubilee Family Centre
 - NSPCC in respect of St. Peters Family Centre;
- (2) that the Town Clerk be authorised to enter into the lease agreements upon agreement of detailed terms.

286. ACCOUNTABLE BODY ROLE FOR LEICESTER NORTH WEST HEALTHY LIVING NETWORK

Councillor Patel submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's approval for Leicester City Council to assume the accountable body status for this New Opportunity Fund supported initiative, subject to the approval of the Head of Legal Services and Chief Finance Officer to the detail of the contract.

RESOLVED:

that Leicester City Council undertakes the Accountable Body Role for Leicester North West Healthy Living Network, subject to

the approval of the Head of Legal Services and Chief Finance Officer to the detail of the contract.

287. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Willmott paid tribute to his colleague Councillor Patel, Deputy Leader, as this was his last Cabinet meeting. He thanked him for his support and wished him the best for the future.

288. 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 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.

LAND AT REDHILL – CHAOS ENTERPRISES

289. LAND AT REDHILL - CHAOS ENTERPRISES

Councillor Patel submitted a report regarding the request from the Service Director, Regeneration for the disposal of land at Redhill to Chaos Enterprises (Leicester) Limited. An addendum report had also been circulated to the Cabinet

Councillor Patel recommended that a decision be deferred to a future meeting to enable further information to be provided.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the matters contained within the report be noted; and
- (2) that a further report be submitted to a future meeting.

290. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.58pm.