



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2003 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor R. Blackmore - Chair  
Councillor Scuplak - Vice-Chair

Councillor Coles  
Councillor Coley  
Councillor Hunt

Councillor Johnson  
Councillor Metcalfe  
Councillor Mugglestone

Councillor Suleman

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**56. 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 Hunt declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Report 'B', 'Research into Affordable Housing Moratorium', as he was a member of the Board of the Leicester Regeneration Company.

The Chief Executive declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Report 'B', 'Research into Affordable Housing Moratorium', as he was a member of the Board of the Leicester Regeneration Company.

Councillor Hunt and The Chief Executive were appointed as representatives of the City Council.

**57. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Item of Urgent Business

The Leader reported that he was accepting an item of urgent business onto the agenda relating to an options report on the Braunstone Leisure Centre as agreed at the Special Council Meeting held on 29 August 2003. Due to the commercially sensitive issues contained within the report, he proposed that the report be considered in private session.

Parking Bye-laws

The Leader stated it was his intention to ask Officers to consider the Council's bye-laws as far as they related to the overnight parking in lay-bys, car parks and other places. He wanted to consider the legal implications of these and to receive a report at a future meeting of Cabinet.

#### **58. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 4 August 2003, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **59. REVITALISING NEIGHBOURHOODS**

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report presenting a range of options for the Cabinet's consideration on those aspects of Revitalising Neighbourhoods which had been selected for review. These included; area committees as an option for local decision making; boundaries as defined by the project; Neighbourhood Co-ordinator responsibilities and resources issues including financial aspects of customer services.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the options presented in the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the report be referred to the Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee to seek their views.

#### **60. RESEARCH INTO 'AFFORDABLE HOUSING MORATORIUM'**

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report which presented the research into the 'moratorium' for affordable housing in three parts of the City area. The Strategic Planning and Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Committees had also considered the report.

The relevant minutes extracts from the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 7 August 2003 and the Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 21 August 2003 were circulated to the Cabinet.

Councillor Blackmore noted that both Scrutiny Committees had requested that this matter be referred to Council for discussion.

RESOLVED:

that, recognising the request by both the Strategic Planning and Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Committees that the future provision of affordable housing receive wider consideration, the matter be referred to the next meeting of full Council and that the

current moratorium be continued until further determination by the Cabinet at its meeting on 13 October 2003.

#### **61. PLAY AREA AND KICKABOUT AREA IMPROVEMENTS 2003-2004**

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report outlining the approved capital funding available for children's playgrounds and kickabout areas and presenting proposals for the refurbishment of existing play areas. The report also proposed that a detailed assessment of kickabout areas be carried out in preparation for a subsequent review.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the refurbishment of six play areas at a cost of £55,000 from the 2003/04 capital programme, be approved;
- (2) to note that a report will be submitted at a later date which will present the findings of the kickabout area assessment and make recommendations for refurbishment and development works to be funded from the remaining capital programme provision.

#### **62. SPINNEY HILL PARK - PROPOSED SITE FOR POLICE STATION**

Councillor Coley submitted a report outlining the current position and background with regard to the proposal to construct a Local Policing Unit on Spinney Hill Park and its impact on the availability of potential lottery funding.

It was noted that the Heritage Lottery funding required comprehensive evidence of public support for the Police Station on the site. It was therefore proposed that a public consultation exercise be undertaken.

The Chair requested that careful consideration be given to the consultation process to ensure that all affected local residents, all local Ward Members and all relevant interested groups be included and their views sought.

Members of the Cabinet also requested that the consultation be undertaken as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

that having regard to both the potential for leveraging in lottery or similar funding, which cannot be achieved without community consultation, and the wishes of the local Ward Members for further consultation, a public consultation exercise be undertaken to seek the views of the community with regard to the proposals for a Local Policing Unit on Spinney Hill Park.

#### **63. MEMORIAL SAFETY - WELFORD ROAD CEMETERY**

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report informing the Cabinet that, for

health and safety reasons, the Corporate Director had utilised an exception clause under Contract Procedure Rule 4.1(k) of the City Council in order to enable essential safety works to be carried out at Welford Road Cemetery as a matter of urgency. The exception clause allowed urgent work to be carried out without the need for a tendering process.

RESOLVED:

that the action taken by the Corporate Director to ensure that essential health and safety works were carried out at Welford Road Cemetery as described in the report, be noted.

#### **64. SAFFRON HILL CEMETERY - CHILDREN'S SECTION**

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report seeking approval to spend £63,000 within the 2003/04 capital programme, in order to complete the development of the existing burial land for the interment of young children and babies at Saffron Hill Cemetery.

RESOLVED:

that capital funding of £63,000 to complete the children's section at Saffron Hill Cemetery, be approved.

#### **65. COLLECTION OF WATER CHARGES**

Councillor Metcalfe submitted a report asking the Cabinet to determine whether to continue with the collection of water rates and sewerage charges (water charges) from Council tenants on behalf of Severn Trent Water.

Councillor Metcalfe felt that in order to maintain good relationships with tenants that the Council discontinue with the collection of water charges.

The Corporate Director of Housing also commented in response to a question that the Council did have to cover an amount of bad debt in relation to the collection of water charges.

The relevant minutes extract of the Housing Scrutiny Committee held on 21 August 2003 were circulated to the Cabinet. The Committee had supported the proposal to discontinue the collection of water charges.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that, in view of the negative relationship that the collection of water charges creates with Council tenants, the agreement with Severn Trent Water for the collection of water charges be stopped with effect from 1 April 2004; and
- (2) that to ensure the 1 October deadline for giving notice to Severn Trent Water will be fulfilled, in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 12(d), the decision be regarded as urgent and that, in consequence, no call-in of the

decision be allowed.

#### **66. BEST VALUE OF E GOVERNMENT - SCOPE**

Councillor Coley submitted a report seeking approval of the scope of the e-government Best Value review, as attached to the report.

RESOLVED:

that the scope of the Best Value review of e-government, be approved, as follows:-

- (i) to ensure the Council is able to achieve the 2005 target of 100% of relevant services being accessible electronically; and
- (ii) to consider whether the Council is fully embracing the potential of e-government.

#### **67. MEMBERS' ACCOMMODATION**

Councillor Coley submitted a report considering changes to the allocated Members accommodation within the Members' Services Section.

RESOLVED:

that the relocation of the Deputy Leader's Office to Members Office 1, with the consequent vacation of Members Office 1 by Councillors Willmott and Draycott and other Members of the Labour Group, be approved.

#### **68. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair agreed to accept the following item as urgent business.

##### **BRAUNSTONE LEISURE CENTRE – OPTIONS**

The reasons for urgency are that further delay would reduce the opportunities to consider alternative design proposals for the Braunstone Leisure Centre and potentially result in increased costs to the City Council.

#### **69. PRIVATE SESSION**

Councillor Blackmore noted that he had received a request from Councillor Sandringham to remain in the meeting for the discussion on report B1 "Performing Arts Centre Issues", and Report B2 "Braunstone Leisure Centre". He stated she had confirmed that she had no interests to declare in the item and that her 'need to know' was on the basis of her role as Group Spokesperson of the Arts Leisure and Environment Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet agreed to this request.

RESOLVED:

- (1) 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.

Paragraph 7

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

Paragraph 12

Advice received, information obtained or action to be taken in connection with the determination of any matter affecting the authority.

Performing Arts Centre Issues

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.

Paragraph 12

Any advice received, information obtained or actions to be taken in connection with any legal proceedings by or against the authority or the determination of any matter affecting the authority.

Braunstone Leisure Centre – Options

- (2) that Councillor Sandringham be allowed to remain in the meeting for the discussion of report B1 "Performing Arts Centre Issues", and Report B2 "Braunstone Leisure Centre".

## **70. PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE ISSUES**

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report informing the Cabinet of issues affecting the development of the Performing Arts Centre and seeking agreement to continue the development of the project.

RESOLVED:

that option 2, as detailed in the supporting information of the report, be adopted in light of the financial implications as set out in the report.

## **71. BRAUNSTONE LEISURE CENTRE - OPTIONS**

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report presenting options to Cabinet for Braunstone Leisure Centre, with associated costs and risks, as requested by Cabinet on 21 July 2003.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that having considered the available options open to the Council, Option one within the Options Analysis in the report, to continue with the originally approved design, be approved;
- (2) that the construction cost be approved at a Guaranteed Maximum Price of £9,026,000;
- (3) that Officers be instructed to examine, along with members of the BCA and other interested parties, the revenue operational running costs of £672,000 per annum with a view to reducing them as far as possible; and
- (4) that under Cabinet Procedure Rule 12(d), no objection to the decision be allowed on the grounds that further delay to the project would increase the costs to the Council.

The full decision is recorded in the private section of the Minutes as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 and Paragraph 12 of Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1990, that is, 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 and, any advice received, information obtained or actions to be taken in connection with any legal proceedings by or against the authority or the determination of any matter affecting the authority.

## **72. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 6.14 pm.

