



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 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 Mugglestone
Councillor Suleman

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113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

No declarations were made.

114. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Allotments in the City

The Leader announced that he was pleased to report that the number of residents in Leicester renting allotments had risen, with some sites now full.

b) Gorse Hill Farm Park

It was noted that 2 baby goats had been born at the Farm Park.

115. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2003, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

116. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Cabinet received the following item from Scrutiny Committees.

ARTS, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1 OCTOBER 2003

Cultural Quarter Update

The Committee agreed the following resolution at its meeting:-

- *that the Cabinet considers ensuring that any future project management teams have senior planning management representation as a matter of course.*

Councillor Hunt was happy to support the Scrutiny Committee's suggestion.

RESOLVED:

that any future project management teams include appropriate planning input.

117. CORPORATE PLAN 2003/06

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report presenting a proposed Corporate Plan for 2003/2006. It was noted the the purpose of the Corporate Plan was to provide an overarching document which set out clearly the direction and key objectives of the Council. The Plan had been produced following consultation both within the Council and with partners.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that Council be recommended to approve the Corporate Plan 2003/06, as attached to the report; and
- (2) that the Chief Executive be commissioned to cascade it throughout the Council through a structured communications strategy.

118. MAJOR HIGHWAY SCHEMES

Councillor Hunt submitted a report seeking a Cabinet recommendation to Council about the order in which three major highway schemes should be constructed and designed. The report detailed the implications of each scheme. It was agreed that the A6030 Corridor scheme should take first priority as to delay it would mean that Contract One would not be complete before the Victoria Road East Extension was built, the anticipated effect of the latter road being to significantly increase traffic flows in the A6030 corridor. Whilst the problem could be mitigated by delaying the opening of the Victoria Road East Extension, the Engineer's advice was that this should not be for more than a maximum of 3 months or there would be insufficient time to identify any faults at the contractor's expense.

The report also sought delegation to the Corporate Director responsible for Highways and Transportation for authority to enter into contracts for the construction of these schemes.

The minutes of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 8 October 2003 were attached to the report. The Scrutiny Committee had not expressed a preference.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that Option C, (A6030 Corridor starting January 2004; Hinckley Road/Outer Ring starting 2005; and Pork Pie starting 2006), as detailed in the report, be recommended to Council for inclusion in the Policy and Budget Framework; and
- (2) that subject to Council's approval, the Corporate Director responsible for Highways and Transportation, be authorised in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to select contractors for these schemes and the Head of Legal Service be authorised to sign the relevant contracts.

119. EXTENSION OF RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEMES

Councillor Hunt submitted a report seeking the Cabinet's agreement that, in the light of the recent consultation exercises carried out in three separate areas of the City, the current timetable for the introduction of residents' parking schemes be amended and no further work on residents parking schemes be undertaken until decriminalised parking powers were in force.

It was noted that in each of the three areas in which consultation took place, the majority of respondents were opposed to the proposals, the most common reason given being that the cost of £48 per annum was too high.

The major cost in operating a residents parking scheme, at the present time, was the cost of enforcement. Under existing legislation enforcement could only be carried out by the police using police officers or traffic wardens. All fines levied were paid direct to central government and the cost of providing the enforcement had to be met locally. The Chief Constable had made it clear that Leicestershire Constabulary could not meet those costs and it had previously been agreed by Cabinet that the cost of enforcement would have to be met from the permit income. The proposed annual charge of £48 included £32 per permit for enforcement costs.

The Council were already working towards the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement for the city. This system would allow the Local Authority to take over the enforcement of all parking restrictions from the police. Under this system, all of the fine income would be retained to fund enforcement. The introduction of this system might allow residents parking schemes to be operated at a significantly reduced permit price as permit charges were likely to

only need to cover the permit administration costs and the maintenance costs for signs and lines. The enforcement costs should be covered by the income from fines. The initial target for the introduction of Decriminalised Parking was 2007. However, it was hoped to be able to bring this forward.

The relevant minutes extract from the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee held on 8 October 2003 was attached to the report. The Scrutiny Committee supported the proposals.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the existing proposals for residents parking schemes be deferred and no further work regarding such schemes undertaken until decriminalised parking powers are in force; and
- (2) that the work to introduce decriminalised parking powers be progressed as quickly as possible using existing resources with the aim of having the powers in force by January 2007 or sooner, if possible; and
- (3) that following the introduction of decriminalised parking powers, the cost of implementing and operating residents parking schemes be reassessed and further consultation carried out with a view to introducing such schemes at a cost significantly less than £48 per annum.

120. PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT - PAYMENT OF PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT

Councillor Coley submitted a report seeking a recommendation to Council with regard to the sharing of the performance reward grant, payable from central government at the end of the Public Service Agreement period with the Council. The Public Service Agreement with the government was made up of 12 targets covering services across the Council. The grant would be up to £7.5 million, depending on success.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Council, in considering the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2004/5 to 2006/07, be recommended to award the performance reward grant as follows:-
 - (a) Where the delivery of the targets is the sole responsibility of the council:-
 - i) the revenue element is paid directly to the lead department. Where more than one department is involved then grant should be allocated based on actual performance;
 - ii) for the cost efficiency target revenue elements are

retained corporately and the use be determined as part of the council's corporate revenue budget; and

- (b) Where the targets are delivered by partners:-
 - i) For target 6, (reducing the number of adult smokers), 100% of the revenue grant be paid to the East Leicester PCT;
 - ii) For target 7, (reducing domestic burglary), 100% of the revenue grant be paid to the Crime & Disorder Partnership;
 - iii) For target 11, (improving employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups), 50% of the revenue grant be paid to the City Council, 30% to JobCentrePlus and 20% divided between the other partners.
- c) that all capital elements of the target be retained corporately and the use be determined against corporate priorities as part of the capital programme process.

121. RESPONSE TO THE SECOND DEPOSIT REPLACEMENT CITY OF LEICESTER LOCAL PLAN

Councillor Hunt submitted a report asking the Cabinet to recommend to Council that the responses to the Second Deposit Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan be approved along with the proposed pre-enquiry changes.

It was noted that recent advice from the Head of Legal Services indicated that the report did not require Council approval at this stage and that changes to the draft Plan for consultation were a Cabinet matter.

The relevant minute of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee had been circulated to the Cabinet. The Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Further to the report, the Corporate Director of Culture and Regeneration asked for an additional resolution that she be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Link Member, to agree the detailed wording of the sections of the Plan in which changes were proposed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the responses to objections received be endorsed; and
- (2) that the proposed pre inquiry changes to the Plan be approved for publication and consultation, the detailed wording of the changes to be delegated to the Corporate

Director of Regeneration and Culture, in consultation with the Cabinet Link Member.

122. OPTIONS FOR REINVESTING INTO LEICESTER'S MARKETS SERVICE

Councillor Mugglestone submitted a report outlining the options available to ensure the Markets Service benefited from investment to sustain its profitability.

RESOLVED:

that the need to invest in the Markets service be acknowledged and the situation reviewed to make sure the best mechanism is found to enable this to happen, the findings of the review to be included in the 2005/06 budget strategy.

123. SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE - 8 BOWLING GREEN STREET AND 45-49 BELVOIR STREET

Councillor Hunt submitted a report presenting the draft Site Development Guidance for 8 Bowling Green Street and 45-49 Belvoir Street.

RESOLVED:

that the Site Development Guidance for 8 Bowling Green Street and 45-49 Belvoir Street, be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan.

124. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT AGENCY

Councillor Johnson submitted a report seeking a recommendation to Council that the Council's Policy Framework be amended by agreeing that the Authority become the sole member of the School Development Support Agency.

The School Development Support Agency was established by the DfES in July 2000 as part of the recovery strategy in the wake of the Ofsted report into the performance of the City Council as a local education authority. It was a limited company owned by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, and for the first two years of its life, was mainly funded by the DfES, with the City Council financing its accommodation and some administrative costs.

In May 2003, it was agreed with the Secretary of State that ownership of the company should transfer to the Council with the number of directors increasing from four to nine. Of these nine directors, one would be a representative chosen by the Leader, one from the secondary sector, one from the special sector, two from the primary sector, the Director of Education or his representative, one governor representative, one representative from the Teachers Consultative Committee (TCC), and one co-opted by these eight representatives on an annual basis.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that Council be recommended to amend the Policy Framework by agreeing that the City Council become the sole member of the School Development Support Agency, in place of the Secretary of State; and
- (2) that, subject to the Council agreeing to the above proposal, the Cabinet agree that the exercise of the Council's membership rights in the company be delegated to the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning in consultation with the Cabinet Link for Education.

125. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY - COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF VARIOUS HOUSES

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report recommending that Compulsory Purchase Orders were sought of a number of properties under the City Council's Empty Homes Strategy in order to secure their improvement, proper management and occupation as residential dwellings.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the land and dwellings outlined in the attached appendices be made the subject of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) under sections 9 and 17 of the Housing Act 1985, Section 93 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, in order to secure their improvement, proper management and occupation as residential dwellings; and
- (2) that the necessary capital expenditure be authorised from the Empty Homes Strategy line in the agreed Capital Programme; and
- (3) that the Corporate Director of Housing submit a report identifying how many further properties there were in the City, subject to Compulsory Purchase Orders, which had been empty for more than 5 years.

126. SALE OF THE HAYMARKET CAR PARK LEASE

The Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity withdrew this report.

127. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.45pm