



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CABINET

Held: MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2007 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor R Blackmore - Chair
Councillor Scuplak - Vice-Chair

Councillor Coley
Councillor Gill
Councillor Grant
Councillor Mugglestone

Councillor Ramsdale
Councillor Sandringham
Councillor Smith
Councillor Suleman

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245. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

St George's Day

The Leader announced that many events had taken place over the weekend to celebrate St George's day, which had included "On the Trail of the Dragon" at New Walk Museum and "The Perfect, Gentle Knight: at the Jewry War Museum: trying on armour, creating heraldic shields, making a dragon and joining in a St George's Day Parade.

'The Big Picture'

The Leader announced that the Regeneration and Culture Department had put together a two-minute commercial entitled 'The Big Picture' that showed the extent of work taking place in Leicester city centre. He stated that the advert would be running at the Shires until the end of this week.

Library Award

The Leader announced that Leicester had won a national award for a joint project with the London Libraries Development Agency called 'Welcome to your Library', which aimed to get refugees and asylum seekers more involved with local library services. He announced that he was delighted with the national recognition for Leicester and of the achievements of Simon Parker, the Community Librarian for New Communities and the central library team who were doing life-changing work with refugees and asylum seekers.

Council Tax Collection

The Leader announced that this years Council Tax and Business Rates collection rates were the best ever achievement, reporting that it had increased by 1.6% to 95.4% which was the best in-year collection rate since the tax was

introduced in 1933, and that the Business Rates were also up by 0.5% to 89.7%.

Investing In People

The Leader also announced that the Adults and Housing Department had successfully retained their Investor in People status following an assessment earlier in the year. He stated that this was awarded to those organisations that demonstrated that they improved performance through the management and performance of their staff. He congratulated all those concerned.

Bishop Street Post Office

The Leader stated that he was shocked to learn of the plans to close down the Bishop Street Post Office in the City Centre and replace it with a facility in WH Smith. He regarded the proposal as totally outrageous and announced that he and his colleagues were in strong opposition to it. He stated that he had written to the 3 City MPs to urge them to make strong representations against the proposal in order for it to be stopped.

246. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mugglestone declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Appendix B1, 'Leicester Theatre Trusts Business Plan for the Operation of the Performing Arts Centre', as a Director of the Leicester Theatre Trust. Councillor Mugglestone left the meeting during discussion of this item.

247. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2007, having been circulated to Members, be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

248. MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee – 28 March 2007

Expansion of 2002 Street Drinking Ban and Potential Implications On Anchor Centre Dover Street

The following was agreed at the above meeting.

“that Cabinet be asked to review funding of the scheme and consider possible sources of funding for an additional project worker”.

Councillor Smith responded to the referral and proposed to monitor the number of referrals to the Anchor Centre and other similar centres over the next 6 months. He also reported that the issue of funding would be considered at the next meeting of the Safer Leicester Partnership.

Castle and Knighton Area Committee – 26 March 2007

Responses to Public Questions Raised at the Last Meeting – Brown Signs

The following was agreed at the above meeting.

“that Cabinet be requested to consider developing a policy which is more sympathetic towards promoting local specialist shopping areas by the erection of Brown Signs”.

Councillor Mugglestone responded to the referral. He noted that standard directional signs were usually used for shopping areas and that for ‘brown signs’ to be used, suitable parking needed to be available. Until recently, sufficient parking had not been available at Stoneygate Shops, which was the shopping area that the Area Committee were concerned with. However, it was noted that meter parking had recently been installed in the area giving an increase in the number of parking spaces over a day. Visitor numbers would be monitored and in light of the information gathered this issue would be looked at in July.

249. AREA COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

Councillor Sandringham submitted a report that sought Cabinet endorsement of spending proposals by Area Committees.

Councillor Blackmore stated that a late paper had been circulated that detailed spending proposals by the Abbey and Beaumont Leys and Belgrave, Latimer and Rushey Mead Area Committees, which had met after the Cabinet papers, had been finalised. He suggested that since the recommendations had not been circulated widely that although Cabinet were minded to support them, there should be further public involvement regarding the proposals prior to submission to the next meetings of the relevant Area Committees.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the expenditure proposals in Appendix A be agreed; and
- (2) that the additional proposals contained in the Supplementary Report be approved subject to further public involvement regarding these proposals prior to being ratified by the next meeting of the respective Area Committees.

250. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

Councillor Coley submitted a report that summarised the work of the auditor in respect of the previous financial year (2005/06), and provided the auditor’s views on the Council’s performance, accounts, financial management

arrangements, and arrangements for delivering value for money.

The relevant notes from the Informal Meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee on 28 March 2007 had been circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Annual Audit Letter be welcomed; and
- (2) that the Standards and Audit Committee be thanked for their concern and the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture be asked to consider whether any further action needs to be taken in respect of training community representatives involved in regeneration partnerships.

251. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

Councillor Blackmore submitted a report that provided an overview of the Council's performance in delivering services to citizens over the last quarter (October, November and December 2006).

Councillor Blackmore paid particular thanks to those staff in the Housing Benefits and Planning Management and Delivery Sections whose performance had significantly improved over the last quarter.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the current initiatives to drive improvement across the Council be maintained; and
- (2) that those areas demonstrating continuous improvement in performance be congratulated.

252. WATERSIDE - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Councillor Scuplak submitted a report that recommended the adoption of the Waterside Supplementary Planning Document, as a supporting document to the City of Leicester Local Plan 2006.

RESOLVED:

that the Waterside Supplementary Planning Document be adopted as supplementary to the City of Leicester Local Plan 2006.

253. TAYLOR ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL - CONSULTATIONS

Councillor Suleman submitted a report that advised Members of the outcome of consultations on proposals to increase the size of Taylor Road Primary School; that sought Members' views on whether they wished to publish formal proposals to increase the size of the school and if so, to what size.

Councillor Suleman noted the hard work of those who had contributed to extending the size of the school.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the outcome of the consultations be noted.
- (2) that in response to the consultation carried out and the needs of the community, proposals be published to establish a 3 form entry (630 pupils + 45 place nursery)
- (3) that the implementation of the statutory process for the above be authorised; and
- (4) that subject to the satisfactory completion of the statutory approval process, the Corporate Director be authorised to procure the works and implement the project.

254. CAPITAL ALLOCATION FOR DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

This item was withdrawn by the Corporate Director.

255. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Councillor Coley submitted a report that reviewed progress made towards implementing the Council's Corporate Risk Management Strategy and considered the challenges ahead and sought the agreement and support of Cabinet for the revised Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy.

The relevant notes from the Informal Meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee on 28 March 2007 had been circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy be approved and the action plan in the Supporting Information be endorsed.
- (2) that it be confirmed that the Cabinet Member for Resources should be the Lead Member for Risk Management and actively participate in the development of the Risk Management strategy and associated action plans.
- (3) that the delivery of risk briefing for Members be supported.

256. SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2009

Councillor Coley submitted a report that informed Cabinet that, following consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Lead Member for Regeneration

and Culture, Leicester had submitted a bid to host the National Special Olympic Games in Leicester in 2009. The Cabinet were extremely supportive of this event and the huge benefits it could bring to the City.

RESOLVED:

that Leicester's bid to host the 2009 Special Olympic Games be endorsed and supported, and the sum of £200,000 be allocated from the capital programme over 3 years to support the appointment of a Games Director and Fundraiser and to demonstrate commitment from the City Council.

257. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair announced that this was to be Councillor Scuplak's final Cabinet meeting, and thanked him for his contribution to the Council.

258. 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 and taking all the circumstances into account, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the information as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Paragraph 3

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

- Leicester Theatre Trusts Business Plan for the Operation of the Performing Arts Centre.

Paragraph 5

Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

- Leicester Theatre Trusts Business Plan for the Operation of the Performing Arts Centre.

259. LEICESTER THEATRE TRUSTS BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Councillor Coley submitted a report that informed Members about Leicester

Theatre Trust's Business Plan for the operation of the Performing Arts Centre for the period 2007-2022 and sought endorsement of the plan.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Business Plan prepared by Leicester Theatre Trust for the operation of the Performing Arts Centre for the period 2007 – 2011 be endorsed; and
- (2) That any variations to the business plan that require Council endorsement be delegated to the Corporate Director for Regeneration and Culture in Consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.

260. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.53pm.

