



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
REGENERATION AND CULTURE TASK GROUP

Held: WEDNESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2008 at 4.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cooke – Chair

Councillor Blower  
Councillor Palmer

Councillor Naylor  
Councillor Russell

Councillor Connelly (Cabinet Lead of Culture and Leisure)  
Councillor Kitterick (Cabinet Lead for Regeneration and Transport)

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**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED:

that Councillor Cooke be elected as Chair.

**2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Cooke, Task Group Leader welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were given for Councillor Glover.

**4. 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 applies to them.

Councillor Blower declared a personal interest relating to school meals as she had school age children.

Councillor Cooke declared an interest as he was a Council appointed member of the OverSeas Links Working Party and was a cardholder for concessionary bus fares.

Councillor Naylor declared that he was Task Group Leader for the review into festivals and events.

Councillor Palmer declared an interest as he had Chaired the 2012 Executive Working Group.

Councillor Russell declared a personal interest as her partner was the Cabinet Lead for Leisure and Culture and she had suggested the proposal for the market courier service.

## **5. THE DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY OF REGENERATION AND CULTURE 2008/09 – 2010/11**

Andy Keeling, Corporate Director for Regeneration and Culture presented the draft report on the Revenue Budget Strategy of Regeneration and Culture 2008/09 – 2010/11. It was reported that it had been set in the context of the last few years and aimed to help the department to meet its core objectives. Over the last few years there had been a reduction in the budgets of around £6.5 million or 10%, which had mostly related to reductions to back office functions and management.

It was reported that there was an increase in the net expenditure budget of £1,032,000 to provide for a number of specific growth areas. There was also a number of significant cost pressures that were addressed in the budget that had resulted from previous years or new cost pressures facing the Council totalling £1,982,000. It was felt that the excess costs could be kept within the departmental budget and offset by savings.

The Cabinet Leads for Culture and Leisure and Regeneration and Transport noted that the budget was set in the context of future years and would help the service to move forward.

Members of the Task Group queried the role of the new city wardens, and if they could be used to identify houses that needed cleaning or repairing under the new Council powers. In response it was noted that there was a number of powers the city wardens would be able to enforce and they would be able to identify issues and give out fines. The priorities for the wardens were to be identified once the budget had been agreed, although it was felt that their role would be practical with a flat management structure.

A Member of the Task Group queried why Leicester Asian Youth Association was under the Regeneration and Culture budget instead of Children and Young Peoples Department. In response it was noted this was because the services it provided related to sport.

Members expressed support for the funding towards the current festivals and

events programme, with the potential for additional activities. In response it was noted that from the £100,000 available there might be limited resources for new events, as spend could go towards events that were not included in the budget from previous years. It was reported that the final costs from the 2007 Caribbean Carnival had not yet been reported and it was still unclear whether it would be held on an annual or biannual basis.

A Member of the Task Group queried if the external funding that would be sought for the Economic Regeneration section was guaranteed. In response it was reported that funding had been supplied through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), which was soon to end and would be funded instead through the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and possibly Local Area Agreement. Andy Keeling said that the work in this new area needed to be re-orientated to ensure we met our new emerging economic priorities and outcomes.

Members discussed that the shortfall of additional government funding to cover the new concessionary fares scheme. In response it was reported the level of potential shortfall was not quantifiable as statistical data on the number of additional journeys for which the Council will become liable for was unknown. An allowance has been made for additional costs within the Council's overall budget.

Members discussed that the allocation for maintaining free sport facilities for the over 60s did not reflect the increasing number of older people. In response it was noted that most of the costs in relation to running this service are fixed and would not change with an increase although the situation would be monitored. Councillor Connolly also stated that this item was a direct replacement for NRF funding that comes to an end this year.

A Member of the Task Group queried if more could be done to subsidise school meals with the rising concerns for healthy meals. In response it was noted that currently schools did not meet the whole cost of this service and it was being subsidised by the Regeneration and Culture Department, but there was a discussion between schools and the Council taking place on this. The Corporate Director explained that demand for school meals had fallen as a consequence of the new healthier menus and that staffing costs were also set to increase due to the new Single Status Agreement and schools were unhappy about meeting these costs. The Corporate Director said that the service needs to be transformed in terms of the meals offered, the canteen environment in schools and the system employed by schools which often means children and young people spend most of their break queuing for a meal. Members suggested that a joint Task Group with Children and Young people be set up to investigate school meals.

Members expressed concern over a lack of cross party participation at the meeting.

Members expressed support for the report and stated that the budget had been allocated with sensitivity and applied to reflect the pressures in the department

and people living in the city.

RESOLVED:

1. That the comments of the task group be presented to Over view and Scrutiny Management Board.
2. That it be suggested that a joint task group be set up to investigate school meals.

## **6. CLOSE OF MEETING**

That the meeting close at 4.55pm

