



Leicester
City Council

MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Held: THURSDAY, 13 MAY 2010 at 5.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillor Grant– Chair

Councillor Joshi
Councillor Potter

Councillor Newcombe
Councillor Senior

Councillor Suleman

Councillor Westley

Cabinet Lead Member for Housing

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203. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

204. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interest that they had in the business on the agenda and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them. The following declarations were made.

Councillor Potter declared personal interests in Item 9, 'Final Report of the Adults and Housing Task Group Review of Choice Based Lettings' as she was the Task Group leader responsible for completing the review and she was a Council tenant.

Councillor Joshi declared a personal interest in Item 9, 'Final Report of the Adults and Housing Task Group Review of Choice Based Lettings', as he had a family member who was a Council tenant.

Councillor Newcombe declared a personal interest in Item 9, 'Final Report of the Adults and Housing Task Group Review of Choice Based Lettings', as he had a family member who worked for Adults and Housing.

In respect of Item 5 'Questions, Representations and Statements of Case'

Councillor Suleman declared that the Member of the Public who had submitted the representation concerning the Staveley Road/Evington Road junction was one of his constituents.

212. DIVISIONAL FEEDBACK ON THE REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT TASK GROUP REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF HIGHCROSS LEICESTER

The Director of Regeneration, Highways and Transportation submitted a report that provided a response to the Regeneration and Transport Task Group Review into the impact of Highcross Leicester.

Mike Richardson, Head of Planning and Development Control, introduced the divisional response. He stated that the three Divisional Directors who engaged with the review welcomed the work undertaken and the outcomes that arose from it. The report responded to each of the recommendations put forward by the Regeneration and Transport Task Group.

In terms of the recommendation with regard to raising the standards of car parking and improving signage to them, it was explained that a comprehensive review of the Council's policies to car parking was to take place within the coming months. Furthermore, a divisional task group had been formed to specifically look at improving the clarity of signage into the City as well as car parking signage.

In connection with reducing voids, Mike reported that the City Centre Director was keen to further reduce the number of these, but that Leicester currently had a lower vacancy rate of city centre retail units than most other comparable cities. In addition, work was being undertaken to improve the standard of shop-fronts in Leicester.

Several Members were of the view that developers should be entitled to use vacant sites within the city centre for car parking, albeit on a temporary basis, and that this would create healthy competition for car parking in the city. In response, Mike reported that increasing the amount of car parking within the City Centre contradicted both national and local legislation and that increasing the usage of public transport alternatives, such as park and ride schemes was to be encouraged.

The legality of staff from private car parking organisations placing directional signage to their facilities was questioned. In response, Mike explained that any such signage placed on a highways structure would be removed by the Council.

Following a query, Mike explained that the Task Group proposed by the division to consider how focussed work on potential regulatory and other proactive interventions could help improve the appearance of major gateways to the City, could be led by the division rather than the Highways and transportation Task Group.

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RESOLVED:

That the Task Group report, with the departmental response and the observations outlined above, be referred to Cabinet, with the recommendation that the report be accepted, the response noted and a programme for future action be called for by Cabinet.