



Leicester
City Council

MINUTES EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the ARTS, LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2002 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Scuplak - Chair
Councillor Sood - Labour Spokesperson
Councillor Bunce - Liberal Democrat Spokesperson

Councillor Dunphy
Councillor Henry (for Councillor Seare)

Councillor Newitt
Councillor Swift

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36. 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.

There were no declarations of interest.

42. DRAFT REVENUE STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL SERVICES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AND ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Corporate Director of Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal, the Corporate Director of Environment, Regeneration and Development and the Chief Finance Officer submitted a joint report which sought the views of the Committee on the draft revenue strategies for the 2 departments.

The Chair expressed concern that the process had not been started earlier and as a result, additional cuts in expenditure were being proposed because decisions were not taken early enough. Other Members agreed that the level of detail in the proposals was insufficient for the Scrutiny Committee to realistically influence the strategy. Members were concerned that the resources for Cultural Services and Leisure had been gradually eroded over the last few years so that they were now spread too thinly and concrete proposals needed to be drawn up to ensure that these services did not lose out.

Councillor Scuplak moved, seconded by Councillor Bunce:-

- a) that between now and the setting of the budget, a report be submitted to all meetings of the Scrutiny Committee with more detailed options;
- b) that the Scrutiny Committee's concern be registered at the continuing calls for cuts in Cultural Services and the truncated nature of the consultation period.

The Corporate Director explained that there would not be any options available for consideration until the end of April and it was proposed to submit these to the Committee in May/June. The proposals would not just be about service cuts but also alternative management options and income generation. The Committee however considered this timetable unacceptable for a fundamental strategic decision. Whilst agreeing that there needed to be a re-appraisal of services, the Committee wanted this done with adequate consultation in an appropriate timescale, against a background of maintaining services at current levels until such time as the review was complete.

The Committee also considered the relevant parts of the budget strategy for the Environment, Regeneration and Development department. Members were not supportive of the proposed reductions and expressed concern about the knock on effects of reduction in toilet provision in the City and introducing charges for disposal of fridges.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the reports be noted;
- (2) that between now and the setting of the budget, a report be submitted to all meetings of the Scrutiny Committee with more detailed options regarding Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal;
- (3) that the Scrutiny Committees concern be registered at the continuing calls for cuts in Cultural Services and the truncated nature of the consultation period.