



Leicester
City Council

**MINUTES
EXTRACT**

(i)

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2003 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Scuplak - Chair
Councillor Sood - Labour Spokesperson

Councillor Dunphy

Councillor Newitt

Councillor Blackmore (for Councillor Bunce)

Councillor Coles (for Councillor Seare)

Councillor Swift

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54. 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.

There were no declarations made.

62. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2002/2003 - PERIOD 8

The Corporate Directors of Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal and Environment, Regeneration and Development and the Chief Finance Officer submitted a report showing a summary position comparing spending with the budget.

Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal

It was reported that expenditure continues to be tightly controlled in order to balance budgets. There had been pressure on the budget from storm damage to trees and an underachievement on income from De Monfort Hall ticket sales. Sales did, however, increase considerably post Christmas following favourable reviews of performances in the local press.

The Committee questioned the feasibility of one off and single events, such as

'One Big Sunday' which generated a substantial shortfall, despite Councillors being assured during planning that the events would be self financing. The Committee expressed its concern that the resulting expense occurred by the council then upsets its other priorities. It was agreed that in future, Councillors should be made fully aware of the risks of such events at the planning stages.

The Committee acknowledged that these events did bring much publicity, investment and tourism to the City and were valuable to the people of Leicester. The Service Director Cultural Services and Neighbourhood Renewal gave a detailed outline of the substantial costs involved in major festivals and the substantial level of income achieved. The reasons for the shortfall were increased health and safety costs, a reduction in sponsorship achieved and an unsuccessful grant application in respect of Music Live. It was confirmed that in addition to 100,000 people attending One Big Sunday, the event brought an estimated investment of £2m into the City. Members suggested a budget provision be set up, which could be transferred from year to year, that acted as an insurance against income shortfalls in the future. It was agreed to pass this to Cabinet for consideration.

ERD BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee noted that it was usual for the budget to be under spent at this point in the year, the specific details of which were laid out on page 6 of the report.

It was noted that a grant of £270,000 had been awarded for the 2002/2003 financial year to cover the costs of collection and disposal of fridge freezers which contain harmful greenhouse gases. The fridge freezers are shipped to Germany for safe disposal Concern was expressed about the costs involved with this and the Committee requested that the possibility of the disposal of fridge freezers in the UK be looked at to cut down on shipping costs to Germany. Members suggested that the base at Cardington may offer a disposal service.

RESOLVED

- 1) That the report be noted,
- 2) That the Committees concerns regarding one-off festivals and events and the suggestion that a budget be provided to underwrite any possible future shortfalls be passed to Cabinet, and
- 3) That the possibility of recycling fridge freezers within the UK be investigated.