



Leicester
City Council

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

Held: WEDNESDAY, 13 AUGUST 2003 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Clair - Chair
Councillor Mrs Maw - Conservative Spokesperson
Councillor Sandringham - Liberal Democrat Spokesperson

Councillor Green
Councillor Hall

Councillor Keeling
Councillor Seare

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12. 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.

Councillor Sandringham declared a non prejudicial interest in Item 22 as she was a manager at the Healthy Living Centre.

Councillor Seare declared a prejudicial interest in Item 23 as her Partner worked for the Braunstone Community Association. Councillor Seare left during consideration of this item.

18. SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD ENFORCEMENT

The Director of Environment, Regeneration and Development presented a report detailing the Service Plan for Food Enforcement 2003/2004 that the department is required to put in place by the Food Standards Agency. The aims and objectives of the plan were outlined as were the circumstances and difficulties that are faced by Enforcement Officers in the Food Safety Team. A new post of 'Hygiene Advisor' was being created which would involve intensive working with targeted food businesses to improve conditions through education. In an attempt to address problems of rodent infestation in certain areas of the city, a "Block Survey" approach was also being piloted.

The anticipated activity for the forthcoming year was reported as were the achievements of the previous year, including a number of successful prosecutions. It was highlighted that due to resource limitations it would not be

possible to undertake all of the inspections programmed for 2003/04. Therefore, it was proposed that inspection resources would be focussed on risk premises, with a significant reduction in the number of low risk inspections being carried out. Members views were sought on this strategy, as well as the plan as a whole which would then be fed through to Cabinet.

Members passed on their congratulations to the Food Safety Team for their achievements and the work they do. Members explained that although they would rather see the full level of inspections take place they appreciated that a balance was needed due to resource limitations and accepted the proposals for inspections in the forthcoming year. Members explained that they had some concerns about the hygiene practices in some food premises (e.g. the wearing of protective clothing) and suggested that a longer term education strategy needed to be used to address this.

Officers explained the legislation surrounding hygiene practices in kitchens and explained that where members had any concerns these could be reported in confidence via the Department's Helpline. Different methods of informing and educating employees in the industry were being considered, but ultimately the authority could prosecute for failing to comply with legislation.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted and the views of the committee be passed to cabinet.