



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Held: THURSDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2011 at 7:00pm

P.R.E.S.E.N.T.

Councillor Grant – Chair
Councillor Bhavsar – Vice-Chair

Councillor Aqbany	Councillor Bajaj
Councillor Johnson (for Cllr Scuplak)	Councillor Kitterick (for Cllr Clair)
Councillor Newcombe	Councillor Potter (for Cllr Joshi)
Councillor Suleman	

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140. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clair, Joshi and Scuplak.

141. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they had the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

No such interests were declared.

142. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2011 was deferred to the meeting on 3 March 2011.

143. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

144. QUESTIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS/ STATEMENTS OF CASE

There were no questions, representations or statements of case.

145. TRACKING OF PETITIONS - MONITORING REPORT

This item was deferred to the meeting on 3 March 2011.

146. ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

The Strategic Director, Development, Regeneration and Culture submitted a report that outlined why the Council needed to address the structural problems of New Walk Centre (NWC) and explained how making a positive decision in the current financial climate would unlock funding for other purposes and act as a catalyst for redefining the Council's offer to the people of Leicester, changing the nature of public service into the future.

The Strategic Director, Development, Regeneration and Culture, introduced the report and stated that a rigorous options appraisal in connection with office accommodation for staff had taken place, and that the report sought approval for further work to commence in relation option 3 (acquisition and refurbishment of the mercury building with retention of other buildings) and option 4 (structural strengthening and refurbishment of A Block only and retention of other buildings, with demolition/sale of B Block to then follow)

Members generally expressed concern around the recommendation for the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Leader to select between options 3 and 4 at the end of the extended appraisal period. Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Suleman moved that the decision to select the preferred option be taken by full Council. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED.

It was felt that a move away from New Walk Centre could serve a heavy negative impact on businesses in the Market Street and Belvoir Street area. Members suggested that further work in relation to the consequences of this be further explored.

Several members expressed concern around whether a robust procurement exercise had been performed. It was commented that as part of the exercise to score the various options, option 2 received two points less than option 4, but that no justification for not proceeding with this option had been provided.

Concern was also expressed that a recommendation was presented around releasing £1.65m to fund the IT transformational change programme without wider context of this being provided to members. In light of the amount of money in question, Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Suleman, moved that a separate report which provided greater detail in respect of the £1.65m required to fund the IT transformational change programme be brought to the Board. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet be asked to agree to refer the final decision for selecting a preferred option to Full Council; and
- (2) That a report which provides greater detail on the IT transformational change programme be brought to the Board.

147. WATERCOURSE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT - CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2010/11

The Strategic Director, Development, Culture and Regeneration, submitted a report that sought the Board's consideration of the 2010/11 Watercourse Improvement budgets.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

148. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY TASK GROUP - DIVISIONAL RESPONSE - LEICESTER'S FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND ALLEVIATION ARRANGEMENTS

This item was deferred to the meeting on 3 March 2011.

149. ASHTON GREEN - STAGE 2

The Director of Planning and Economic Development submitted a report that asked the Board to consider stage 2 of the Ashton Green project following outline planning approval at Planning Committee.

The Ashton Green Project Manager stated that this report considered the best way to support the project through the developer procurement stage to enable land disposals and a potential start on site from 2012/13 onwards. Members heard that officer would now work to secure a developer to implement the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the recommendations contained within it be endorsed

150. SUB REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Strategic Director, Development, Culture and Regeneration, submitted a report that updated members on the development of a new approach to support economic development in the Leicester and Leicestershire sub-region, including the establishment of a Local Enterprise Partnership and a Single Delivery Vehicle (combining Prospect Leicestershire and Leicestershire

Promotions).

The Strategic Director, Development, Culture and Regeneration, stated that this report recommended the combination of Leicestershire Promotions and Prospect Leicestershire into a single company. Members heard that several details of the changes were still to be confirmed which included chairing arrangements and the name of the new company.

It was questioned whether the change of arrangements could lead to the Council being liable for paying the rent of the existing Prospect Leicestershire premises in Colton Square. In response, members heard that the lease was held by Leicestershire County Council, but the City had a commitment to sharing that responsibility. Officers were optimistic that the building would be sub-let.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the recommendations contained within it be endorsed.

151. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.