

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE HELD
AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WIGSTON ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillor Mrs S B Morris - Chairman
Councillor K J Loydall - Vice Chairman

Councillors: T S Biring, G A Boulter, J W Boyce, M Carrara,
Mrs L Eaton, C S Gore, Mrs S Z Haq, B A Hings,
R E R Morris and J Vickerstaff.

Standards Committee Members: J B Burton and Mrs P Glasse
also attended the meeting

Officers in attendance: Mrs A Court, Mr M Clegg, Miss R
Miles, Mr P Johnson and Mr G J
Waterfield.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the
Committee held on 24 June 2008, be taken as read,
confirmed and signed.

With regard to minute 5a, Core Funding Grants, the
Deputy Chief Executive reported that a meeting with
Voluntary Action Oadby and Wigston was scheduled
for next Thursday and a report on this subject would
now be included on the agenda for the next
committee meeting.

10. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2007-2008

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive as set out in report pages numbered 130(a) to 130(t), which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

Representatives of the External Auditors, Mr Benselin and Mr Bellamy of the Auditing Team, then answered Members' questions on their report. Particularly, reference was made to Table 1 of the report concerning key areas of judgement and audit risk. The meeting noted that the External Auditors were now happy that the matters raised in this table had been addressed to their satisfaction and that there were now no uncorrected adjustments that required the Council's attention.

Furthermore, in answer to the question concerning the criteria used for indicating the standards or arrangements for securing economy efficiency and effectiveness in its resources, the Auditors indicated that the Council's performance was adequate in all areas and the view was expressed that the Council offered reasonable value for money in the services that it provided.

RESOLVED: That

1. The report of the External Auditors (appended to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive) be noted and
2. That approval be given to the letter of representation (appendix 1 of the Auditors' Report) being signed by the Deputy Chief Executive)

11. **REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Consideration was given to the reports of the Director of Community Services as set out in report pages numbered 131 to 195, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

a) Landscape Consultancy Services for William Gunning Park Masterplan

In answer to a question, the Head of Legal and Licensing explained to Members why the decision had been taken to exclude the details of tenderers for council services when reporting to committee.

The meeting noted that it was the intention to submit a report to the next meeting of the committee on progress being made with the Council's procurement function being taken on by Welland Partnership and the matter of the practice of maintaining anonymity of tenderers would be included in this report.

RESOLVED: That

1. The quotation of tenderer C be accepted and the company be appointed under the Council's terms and conditions of contract to undertake the said works and
2. A report on progress of the Council's procurement function under the Welland Partnership be submitted to the next meeting of the committee, to also include the question of including the names of companies tendering within committee documents.

b) Blaby Road Park Masterplan

RESOLVED: That

1. The Blaby Road Park Masterplan Review 2008, as contained in the report, be approved
2. Approval be given to going out to tender to appoint a suitable contractor to project manage and implement the Blaby Road Park Masterplan, with anticipated costs in the region of £70,000 for project management and implementation of the whole Masterplan.

c) South Wigston Regeneration Masterplan 2008

Councillor J W Boyce referred to the possibility that the Plan had potential impact on land surrounding where he lived. The Committee noted this situation and the Head of Legal and Licensing advised that any declaration of interest would not be necessary at this stage.

RESOLVED: That

1. The South Wigston Masterplan 2008, as appended to the report, be approved and
2. Proposals within the South Wigston Masterplan 2008 form part of the evidence base for the Allocations Development Plan Document of the Local Development Framework and these be brought into effect through the preparation and consultation upon the document.

d) South Wigston Regeneration Progress and Action Plan

The Director of Community Services reminded the meeting that it was the intention that individual aspects of the plan would be brought back to the committee for their attention on an on-going basis.

Councillor J W Boyce thanked Officers for producing this report but considered that, in order for the general public to get an understanding of the plan's contents, a one page summary sheet needed to be produced indicating the schemes, what they intended to do and when they would be implemented.

The meeting noted that with regard to the proposed joint works involving South Leicestershire College and Leicestershire County Council, the Director was meeting with these parties in the next week and would report back to this committee in due course.

RESOLVED: That

1. The progress of the regeneration of South Wigston against the targets within the original Masterplan be noted
2. The progress and expenditure against the funding secured through the S.106 agreement with Tesco in 2005, including the approval of both South Wigston Masterplan and Blaby Road Park Masterplan be noted
3. Agreement be given in principal with the Regeneration Plan up to 2014 as indicated in the report, subject to individual projects being brought to Members for approval within the context of an annual Service Delivery Plan for the regeneration of South Wigston

4. Agreement be given in principal to working with South Leicestershire College and Leicestershire County Council to develop the proposal to provide a multi-purpose Children and Young Persons Centre, with a final decision subject to further approval by Members, when scheme details have been generated. The level of funding to be contributed to be determined through the outcome of the evidence based Community Needs Assessment and the quantified development costs.
5. A one page factsheet be produced for distribution to the public, indicating schemes contained within the South Wigston Regeneration Action Plan, a description of the scheme and also when the scheme would be carried out.

e) Draft Economic Development Strategy 2008-2013

Members congratulated Officers involved in the contents of this report.

RESOLVED: That the Draft Economic Development Strategy 2008-2013 be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

f) Appointment of Consultants for Local Development Framework and Eco Town

RESOLVED: That

1. Approval be given to the appointment of consultants to undertake a transport assessment in support of the Local Development Framework.
2. Members note the appointment of consultants in conjunction with Harborough District, Leicester City and Leicestershire County Councils' to carry out a strategic impact assessment of the Pennbury Eco Town proposal at an estimated cost to the Council of up to £30,000, to be funded from the Contingency Budget for Eco Town work as previously agreed by the committee.
3. Consideration of the appointment of consultants to carry out a green wedge review and water cycle study be deferred until the next meeting of the committee.

12. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Committee gave consideration to the reports of the Chief Executive as set out in report pages numbered 196 to 208(j), which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

a) Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Letter 2007/2008

The meeting noted the Council's positive record over the previous financial year as shown in the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

b) Project Funding Grant Applications 2008/2009

At the commencement of the discussion on this matter, the Head of Legal and Licensing provided guidance to Members on the declarations of interest relating to these matters.

RESOLVED: That:

1. A grant of £500 be given to the Fantasy Fives Football League and
2. A grant of £500 be given to Oadby Fairtrade Towns Campaign Team.

13. REPORTS OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered the Reports of the Deputy Chief Executive as set out in report pages numbered 210 to 252 which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.

a) Expenditure Review 2008/2009

The Deputy Chief Executive answered a number of questions concerning points raised in this report, at the conclusion of which it was

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

b) Fuel Price Increases

RESOLVED: That approval be given to an allocation of £25,000 from the Contingency Fund to cover the increases in fuel prices

c) Place Survey

RESOLVED: That approval be given to up to £10,000 being allocated from the Contingency Fund for the costs of the new Place Survey.

d) Council Chamber Refurbishment

RESOLVED: That the decision of the Chairman to authorise the allocation of £5,773 from the Capital Contingency for the additional costs of the Council Chamber refurbishment be ratified.

e) Housing and Planning Delivery Grant 2008/2009

RESOLVED: That

1. The provisional receipt of £80,898 in Housing and Planning Development Grant be noted
2. £20,000 of this grant be allocated for office alterations and service improvements in Planning and Building Control, as set out in the report.
3. The remaining provisional allocation of £60,898 be ear-marked for improvements in IT systems, details of which to be agreed by the newly established ICT steering group.

f) Customer Services

RESOLVED: That progress made with the Customer Services Action Plan be noted.

g) Shared Services

RESOLVED: That

1. Progress with the five priority areas for shared services, as set out in the report, be noted
2. The Committee also note the Council's intention to pursue Payroll as a possible shared service with Leicestershire County Council

g) Review of Strategic Risk Register

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the updated Strategic Risk Register as contained in the report.

h) Refurbishment of Oadby Depot Workforce Facilities

A discussion was held on the need to follow up the intended improvements contained in this report with an on-going programme for improvements to staff facilities at the Depot.

RESOLVED: That

1. Funding of £11,000 be allocated from the Contingency Fund to carry out the refurbishments as detailed in Item 7 of the report and
2. A working party be formed to develop and see through a programme to further improve staff facilities at the Oadby Depot.
3. Officers to prepare a report for submission to a future meeting on the composition of the working party.

i) Progress against Service Delivery Plans

RESOLVED: That progress against the various Service Delivery Plans be noted.

14. UPDATE ON ACTION LIST FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting noted the report contained at report page numbered 253, updating Members on actions taken on items discussed at the last meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.