

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND RECORD OFFICE**

**Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to report the response of the Cabinet to the findings of the Review panel established to investigate the problems at the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office.

**Background**

2. The Scrutiny Commission on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2001 agreed to establish a five member review panel with the following terms of reference:-
  - a) To examine the process by which the building and equipment was specified and procured;
  - b) To examine the process which led to the County Council taking legal action which resulted in a cost to the Authority of approximately £600,000;
  - c) To examine the suitability of the existing building and equipment in relation to future needs and demands on the service.
3. The Panel reported its findings to the Scrutiny Commission on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2002. A copy of the Panel's final report is attached as an Appendix to this report. The Commission noted and endorsed the findings of the Panel and asked that the findings be submitted to the Cabinet.

**Response of the Cabinet**

4. The Cabinet considered the report at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2002. The Cabinet received and thanked the Scrutiny Commission for the report. With regard to the recommendations set out in the report of the Scrutiny Review Panel, the Cabinet agreed as follows:-
  - a) The recommendations set out in paragraphs 10, 31, 40, 52 and 57 be noted;
  - b) Paragraph 17: "Design and build" procurement is current practice, where appropriate. Close co-operation and collaboration with client departments and technical specialists is believed to be essential;

- c) Paragraph 26: Mechanisms will be put in place that will ensure that Cabinet is advised at key stages in the process of any litigation or dispute resolution where the County Council is at risk of paying damages or costs exceeding £50,000. A single protocol would not be practical given the diversity of cases brought by or against the County Council.
- d) Paragraph 39: This is an important issue with a potential financial impact. Note that negotiations with Leicester City Council have commenced and that a formal agreement will be required.
- e) Paragraph 47: The digitisation of records is costly and, for electronic resources to be sustainable has long term implications. The digitisation of records would have a marginal effect on the current and medium term storage requirements of the service.
- e) Paragraph 61: Consideration will be given to the issue of funding a possible extension in the light of the outcome of negotiations with the City and a full assessment of the need for additional storage capacity. This is likely to be dependent on significant external funding being available.

### **Recommendations**

- 5. The Commission is asked to note the response of the Cabinet to the findings of the Review panel established to investigate the problems at the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 6. The current remedial works design will take account of the need to maintain access for disabled people to the strongroom.

### **Members circulated under Sensitive Issues Procedure.**

Mr O D Lucas, CC

### **List of Appendices**

A - Final Report of the Review Panel

### **Officer to contact**

Mr M. I. Seedat  
Tel 0116 – 265 6037

### **Background Papers**

Decision of the Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> July

Final Report of the Review Panel (attached)