

Figure 7.2 Report layout:
Leicester City Council.

expressed in one paragraph. The executive summary, however, may extend to several pages depending on the length of the report. It may summarize each section and end with a paragraph on cost, phasing and other details of implementation.

The report may take a number of forms. Figure 7.1 shows one possible structure. In addition to the substantive matter in the various sections, information has to be given to the reader so that he or she can find a way round that information. For this purpose a short introduction describing the format of the report and indicating the content of each section is most useful. The report should also contain the usual list of figures, bibliography, sources of information, appendices and index.

CASE STUDY: LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

If the report is written for a local authority by officers working for that authority there will be documents which give guidance about the style and content of reports. Leicester City Council, for example, has a *Report Writer's Guide*, and a *Guide to Plain English*. This latter booklet is produced by the Policy Unit of the Chief Executive's Office and gives advice on 'how to express yourself clearly and simply and how to avoid **jargon** and **officialese**'.⁶ The first document gives practical information about content, the requirements of reports prepared for particular committees and references to Codes of Practice, Standing Orders, or Financial Regulations. This, or a similar document prepared by another local authority, is essential reading for those working in the field of urban design in the public sector.

Figure 7.2 gives a list of contents for a typical report presented to a committee of a local authority. The advice given in Leicester is to keep the report short: 'The Elected Members are busy people who, in most cases, have to perform their Council duties in addition to their everyday jobs. As their time is precious, they appreciate receiving committee

1	Summary
2	Recommendations (sections 1 and 2 may be combined)
3	Equal Opportunities Implications
4	Policy Implications
5	Details of Consultations
6	Background Papers
7	Report
8	Director of Personnel and Management Services' Comments
9	Director of Computer Services' Comments
10	Cycling Implications
11	Environmental Implications
12	Reason for Referral to Policy and Resources Sub-Committee*
13	City Treasurer's Comments*
14	Reason for Treating the Report as Confidential**

* Only required for reports which have financial implications.

** Only required for reports recommended for consideration in private in accordance with the *Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985*.

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reports which are short, clear and concise.' Report writers are further advised: 'to make the fullest possible use of plans/diagrams where these are appropriate. These can often explain issues more easily than words'. The aim at Leicester is to keep the report to no more than five double-sided pages. Anything larger than that is presented as a short covering report and the full text attached as an appendix.

Reports in Leicester start with a summary and recommendations, the key to understanding the main content. Other sections which are of particular significance are: the policy implications; support for the ideas from other officers after consultation; the

implications of the proposals for special areas of concern which in Leicester include equal opportunities, cycling and the environment. Finally the financial implications of the proposal have to be made clear, together with the views of those responsible for budget control. The aim at Leicester is to prepare quality reports efficiently and only in numbers necessary for effective communication between Officers, Elected Members and general members of the public. The first advice to the would-be-writer is: 'Satisfy yourself that a report is needed and that the matter cannot be dealt with in any other way'.

VISUAL PRESENTATION

A project report is usually accompanied and supported by visual material. In the case of urban design the visual material explaining the project is as important as the written report: in many cases it is more important. The old saying that a drawing is worth a thousand words is particularly apposite for the practice of urban design. There are a number of ways that an urban design project can be illustrated using visual material. The most usual method of illustrating ideas in urban design is the drawing in all its many different forms. The drawing has a long tradition as a means of illustrating townscape and town developments and is still the main means of communicating ideas in urban design. Canaletto, for example, developed tremendous skill in depicting the street scenes of Venice. His drawings and paintings remain an inspiring model for those wishing to illustrate the modern city (see, for example, Potterton, *Pageant and Panorama, The Elegant World of Canaletto*⁷). The drawings may be accompanied and supplemented by models, photographs, colour slides, video and tape recordings. The choice of presentation technique depends very much on the audience at which it is aimed, the type of project and venue for display.

There are four main types of drawings used in urban design. They are: those drawings used to record information; those used in analysis; those used for the presentation of ideas; and finally those drawings used to implement a particular action. The choice of drawing style and technique depends, in part, upon the function of the drawing in the design process. It also depends upon the way in which the drawing will be read, that is, it depends upon, for example, the distance of the observer from the drawing or the surroundings and occasion on which the drawing will be seen.

The photograph is probably the quickest and most efficient way to record both the street scenes and the architecture of the city. The freehand sketch, however, presents the author with the opportunity to select and emphasize those elements in the townscape which are important for the particular project. There are a number of techniques which can be used for the freehand sketch. This variety of sketching techniques and the ability to select and edit material from the townscape gives the designer control over the presentation of the thought process leading to the design solution. Figures 7.3 to 7.5 illustrate the meticulous record of scenes in the landscape.⁸ They should be contrasted with Figure 7.6 where a careful choice has been made about those features of the townscape which the draughtsman wished to emphasize.⁹ There is considerably more editing than in the two earlier drawings. The drawings by Cullen in Figures 3.36 and 3.37 have been edited in a most rigorous, even dramatic manner to illustrate spatial movement through urban space. The city is considered by Cullen to be almost a stage-setting through which the observer moves, appreciating the environment in serial vision, each view being presented as a picture or theatre set.¹⁰ The wonderful drawings by Wiltshire (Figure 7.7) show a natural gift for editing which enables the artist to capture the essential character of the place.¹¹

Design drawings for presentation are of three main types. There are those drawings for public