



Leader's Report

17 December 2014

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Cabinet

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meetings held on 4th November and 2nd December 2014, later in this agenda.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There are no urgent decisions to report since the last Leader's Report on 22 October 2014.

3.0 Leader's Comments

On the 08 October the Chief Executive and I were asked to respond to the County's Peer Review. We were able to mention our shared services which we are benefitting from and the good relationships that we have with County.

On the 11 October I attended a Diwali evening at Lancaster Town Hall which was very well supported and it brings together a diversity of communities.

The Dukes presentation of "A Farewell to Arms" drew a full audience and was an amazing mixture of techniques. This was from the 15 October onwards by a visiting company and was well received.

The Lancaster Museums Joint Steering Group met on the 16 October. A small project group from Lancashire County Council Museums Service has met twice with the District Librarian to explore options for linking the Museum and the Library more overtly. This should use the space between more efficiently and effectively. The proposal to change opening hours was updated and although it was proposed to open on Sundays and close on Mondays, the staff have suggested that Mondays could be used for Group Bookings and for school visits. A possible "Lawless Lancaster Trail" was suggested by a County officer, including our Courtroom visit, the Castle courtroom, The Judges' Lodgings and the story of Buck Ruxton.

The launch of the new Lancaster Destination Brand was held on Lancashire Day at The Storey.

A joint Universities and City event took place on the 21 October. This was held in the Ashton Hall and it attracted a large audience. It was daunting to be on a panel with four professors! Fifty years of our two Universities was well worth celebrating. What would our district be like without them.

At the Lancashire Leaders' meeting on the 03 November an LGA Peer Review of the Health and Wellbeing System Lancashire was discussed. The County had requested this. The County Public Health Grant has been used for a second year to support district councils to deliver affordable warmth interventions.

A Notice of Motion, passed at County in October, has led to an initial discussion about future options available for our region. Areas such as Lancashire would need to follow the examples of Greater Manchester and Merseyside and work towards the creation of a combined authority with other local authorities in the county. All parties at the meeting expressed an interest and an early meeting was requested for further information and discussion.

On the 27 November a meeting of Leaders and Chief Executives of the 12 district plus the two unitary authorities was held at County. It was addressed by David Sparks, chair of the LGA. All districts confirmed that we need a further meeting with some options to discuss. A Working Group of some Chief Executives was to be set up to produce a paper for a 09 December meeting as a starting point for further discussion.

On the 24 November I attended a meeting with the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive of South Lakeland District Council. We discussed their Local Plan and about the process of achieving it. They emphasised the need for housing and of the need to control where it goes. Inward Investment was also discussed and their dialogue with business. Combined authorities is also on the Cumbrian agenda and the Energy Coast councils of Barrow, Copeland, South Lakes and Lancaster.

The Cabinet met the Chamber and BID group on the 25 November. The Market, Inward Investment, Twin Towns, the Future of Cities and United Utilities were discussed. A BID update was given and car parking and branding on lampposts were raised. Over a period of time now BID have expressed a desire to support improvements to the public realm of the City centre. Already they have funded hanging baskets and some improvements to planted areas. They are also currently

working on a project to improve the appearance of a number of the historic ginnels in the City. In addition to this further to a City Council review of street cleansing schedules, following the Square routes work they have agreed to fund 50% of the extra funding needed to increase cleansing levels in the town centre. The meeting was useful and these meetings are to the advantage of all and should continue. The meeting was held at The Storey so that Cabinet Members could see the Tasting Garden, which was an item on the Cabinet agenda.

Thanks to all for your good natured questioning and cooperation during the year. May I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a good New Year.

4.0 Other Matters

Cabinet minutes are attached at the end of this agenda.

5.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 4 November 2014:

- (1) The Dukes - Review of Lease
- (2) The Dukes – Review of Service Level Agreement

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 2 December 2014:

- (1) Smokefree Play Areas – Introduction of a Voluntary Code
- (2) Budget and Policy Framework Update 2015/16
- (3) Sites off Bailrigg Lane, Lancaster

The following Officer Delegated (Key) Decisions were taken during this period:

- (1) Corporate Non-Housing 1st Year Delivery Slippage Plan 2014-15 Procurement Group Intermediate Works – Bridge End Depot, Ryeland Park Changing Rooms, Old Man's Rest, Cottage Museum and Slyne Road Scout Hut.
- (2) Corporate Non-Housing Year 2 Delivery Plan – Lancaster Town Hall Lift Replacement
- (3) Ground Works for Marsh – Phase 2
- (4) Banking Contract
- (5) Elections Management Software Contract
- (6) Phase 2 Communal Refurbishment on Branksome Estate
- (7) Sheltered Accommodation Upgrade – Ripley Court – Remodel of Bedsits
- (8) Replacement of 3 Compact Sweepers

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meetings held on 4th November and 2nd December 2014