

CABINET

10.00 A.M.

12TH MARCH 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors Eileen Blamire (Chairman), Janice Hanson (Vice-Chairman), Jon Barry, Abbott Bryning, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Karen Leytham, Ron Sands and David Smith

Officers in attendance:-

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Mark Cullinan | Chief Executive |
| Nadine Muschamp | Head of Resources and Section 151 Officer |
| Suzanne Lodge | Head of Health and Housing |
| Richard Tulej | Head of Community Engagement Service |
| Liz Bateson | Principal Democratic Support Officer |

126 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 February 2013 were approved as a correct record.

127 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

The Chairman advised that there were no items of urgent business.

128 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point.

129 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members were advised that there had been no requests to speak at the meeting in accordance with Cabinet's agreed procedure.

130 HOUSING ACTION PLAN 2012 - 2017

(Cabinet Members with Special Responsibility Councillors Hanson and Leytham)

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Regeneration and Planning which provided a summary of the content and purpose of the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan 2012 – 2017 along with the final version of the document for approval.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Option 1: Recommend the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan to Council in its current form | Option 2: Recommend the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan to Council with amendments |
| Advantages | The local authority will have an up to date housing strategy in place. | None. |

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|---------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Disadvantages | None. | Any further amendments would necessitate further consultation and another EqIA. |
| Risks | None. | Loss of reputation if the process is delayed given that there has been a three year period with no housing strategy in place. |

The officer preferred option was option 1, to recommend the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan to Council in its current form. There had been considerable work carried out on the preparation of the document to date, which had taken nearly a year to complete, with extensive consultation. Should members approve the document, officers could continue to progress work on the key actions and priorities identified in the Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan within the suggested timescales. The Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan provided a detailed profile of the current housing provision and housing markets as well as the district's future housing needs and requirements and defined the actions required to ensure that the district could respond to current and future housing needs over the five year action plan period and beyond. The Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan would be reviewed annually, with a formal mid-term review planned, which would be reported to members and stakeholders.

Councillor Leytham proposed, seconded by Councillor Hanson:-

- “(1) That the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan 2012-2017 be recommended to Council for approval.
- (2) That the issue of general housing being used as student accommodation be considered in more detail. This would cover the discretion available to the Council in terms of overall numbers, quality and geographical location.
- (3) That section 3.57 in the report be revised to read – ‘Local Planning Authorities through their local plans will specify the standards that new dwellings are required to meet.

Councillors then voted:-

(7 Members (Councillors Blamire, Bryning, Hamilton-Cox, Hanson, Leytham, Sands and Smith) voted in favour, and 1 Member (Councillor Barry) abstained.)

Resolved:

- (1) That the Lancaster District Housing Strategy and Housing Action Plan 2012-2017 be recommended to Council for approval.
- (2) That the issue of general housing being used as student accommodation be considered in more detail. This would cover the discretion available to the Council in terms of overall numbers, quality and geographical location.
- (3) That section 3.57 in the report be revised to read – ‘Local Planning Authorities through their local plans will specify the standards that new dwellings are required to meet.’

Officers responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Regeneration & Planning
Head of Health & Housing

Reasons for making the decision:

The Council's Constitution included the Housing Strategy as part of the policy framework. The decision fits with the Corporate Plan 2012 – 15 - Continuing work to improve the quality and availability of housing, and enhanced quality of life of local residents through access to good quality housing, increasing the number of affordable homes, a reduction in the number of homeless people and a reduction in the number of people sleeping rough. In requesting further consideration of student accommodation Cabinet were mindful of the need to free up more residential accommodation for the private rental sector and take account of the changing nature of the town's university students with the differing needs of more overseas students and increasing number of students selecting universities within commuting distance.

131 COUNCIL HOUSING TENANCY POLICY**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Leytham)**

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Health and Housing which set out the requirement for the Council as a social housing provider to approve and publish a Tenancy Policy.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

| | Option 1: To approve the proposed council housing Tenancy Policy | Option 2: Approve the council housing Tenancy Policy with amendments |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advantages | The council will meet its statutory obligations. | None |
| Disadvantages | None | If amendments are made, it will be necessary to undertake further consultation. |
| Risks | No additional risks identified | Implementation of the policy would be delayed and the council could be open to legal challenge. |

The adoption of the Tenancy Policy would ensure that the Council met its statutory obligations and would enable tenants and prospective tenants to understand the Council's approach to tenancy management.

Councillor Leytham proposed, seconded by Councillor Barry:-

“(1) That the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved.”
Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

(1) That the Council Housing Tenancy Policy annexed to the report be approved.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Health and Housing

Reasons for making the decision:

The regulatory standards for social housing require a Tenancy Policy to be established. The adoption of this policy supports the Council's priority of health and wellbeing in particular ensuring an enhanced quality of life of local residents through access to good quality housing and reducing homelessness. Implementing the decision will have a positive impact and help ensure that the Council met its equality obligations.

132 SALT AYRE SPORTS CENTRE

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Sands)

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Community Engagement to update members on the ongoing operational review of Salt Ayre Sports Centre.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

| | Option 1: Maintain existing programme and opening times | Option 2: Change programme as set out within report |
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| Advantages | Swimming clubs continue with existing times of use. | Council realises savings and efficiencies. Swimming clubs are provided with times that better suit their needs. |
| Disadvantages | Opportunity to provide a programme that better suits clubs is lost. Potential savings to the council are not realised. | Reduction in overall opening times to the sports centre. Minimal reduced public access to fitness suite and swimming pool |
| Risks | Council is seen not to be working towards implementing a change programme that produces efficiencies. | Memberships to fitness suite are lost as a result of reduced opening times. |

Positive discussions with swimming clubs had allowed for changes to the programme to be implemented and as such associated changes to shift rotas. This had resulted in savings being identified for future years through a reduction in staffing numbers.

Councillor Sands proposed, seconded by Councillor Barry:-

“(1) That the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the proposed changes to opening times for Salt Ayre Sports Centre in 2013/14 be approved as set out in the report, with the effective date being delegated to the Head of Service, taking account of operational needs.

Officers responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Community Engagement
Head of Health & Housing

Reasons for making the decision:

To make savings on the cost of operating Salt Ayre. The operation of Salt Ayre sports centre supported a number of Council priorities relating to the health and wellbeing agenda. These operational changes did not impact on that support.

133 DEVELOPMENT OF THE “LIGHT UP LANCASTER” FESTIVAL**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Sands)**

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Community Engagement which sought a decision with regard to an application for Arts Council Funding.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

| Option | Benefits | Risks |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Support the bid | <p>The project aligns closely to a number of council priorities and goals outlined in section 1.4 and it also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Lancaster Square Routes scheme • chimes well with the opportunities the castle development will provide • fits with Marketing Lancashire’s aims to promote Lancaster as a cultural heritage city • fits well with the emerging Arts Strategy for the district • Reflects the Arts Council’s encouragement of bids of this nature. • Is a strong partnership project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It requires match funding, along with a commitment from the city council in acting as accountable body for the next two financial years, • Financial pressures may mean the city council cannot sustain the existing level of match in 2014/15 as it will in 2013/14. However, many elements of match are from non-council sources and other |

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| | | funding opportunities could be sought |
| Not support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advantages above are not realised. • Retains greater budget flexibility for making savings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advantages are not realised. |

The development of the Light up Lancaster festival supported a number of Council priorities in particular the growth of the visitor economy and a bid to the Arts Council was being encouraged by that body.

Councillor Sands proposed, seconded by Councillor Leytham:-

“(1) That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet support the submission of a bid to the Arts Council by the Lancaster Arts Partners.
- (2) That Cabinet note the commitment required to deliver this initiative over the next two financial years.
- (3) That the Council become the Accountable Body for the funding should the bid be successful.
- (4) That the Head of Resources be given delegated authority to update the General Fund Revenue Budget should the bid be successful and subject to there being no additional call on City Council resources.

Officers responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Community Engagement
Head of Regeneration & Planning
Head of Resources

Reasons for making the decision:

The ‘Light up Lancaster’ project aligned closely to a number of council priorities and goals, fitted with the Lancaster Square Routes scheme, opportunities the castle development would provide as well as Marketing Lancashire’s aims to promote Lancaster as a cultural heritage city. It was consistent with the emerging Arts Strategy for the district, reflecting the Arts Council’s encouragement of bids of this nature. Partners believed the project had the potential to become a flagship festival for the county and one acknowledged at national level.

134 COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS - VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR

(Cabinet Members with Special Responsibility Councillors Blamire and Barry)

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Community Engagement to make final recommendations on the services to be commissioned from the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) for 2013 to 2016.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

| | Option 1: Agree the recommendations as proposed | Option 2: Allocate none or only some of the funding |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advantages | <p>Benefits achieved for individuals and families in the district as a result of council support for key services.</p> <p>The resilience and capacity of the VCF sector is improved by support, development and increased collaboration.</p> <p>Contracted services will be able to start or continue uninterrupted from 1 April 2013.</p> | <p>Some or all funding available for alternative priorities.</p> <p>Possible reduction in staff resources required for contract management.</p> |
| Disadvantages | <p>Current budget for VCFS services will be fully committed.</p> <p>Some staff resources required for contract management.</p> | <p>Critical services to individuals and families in the district will be lost or at risk.</p> <p>Potential negative impact on viability and resilience of the VCF sector, created by loss of support and development services.</p> <p>Reduction in volunteering capacity and opportunities in the district.</p> |
| Risks | <p>Contractual arrangements need to be in place by 1 April. Work to confirm service details and contract terms being developed to meet this requirement.</p> | <p>Potential negative impact on individuals and families, created by loss or reduction in VCF services including advice and information.</p> <p>Potential increase in demand for mainstream services, created by early and ongoing interventions</p> |

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| | | normally provided by VCFS. |
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The preferred option was Option 1. This reflected the Council's priorities including the intention to support the most vulnerable in our society. Objectives and outcomes were informed by detailed assessment of needs and opportunities in the district and engagement with a wide range of service delivery partners. The commissioning process had been fair and transparent, providing opportunities for service deliverers to propose effective ways of achieving the required outcomes. Achieving Value for Money had been a key element in developing new service arrangements.

The engagement of service delivery partners in the commissioning process had been invaluable and had informed the development of the Council's approach to VCFS support. An open, fair and transparent commissioning process had resulted in recommendations to Cabinet that broadly met all of the requirements of the Council's Commissioning and Delivery Plan, providing optimum service delivery arrangements to deliver maximum possible benefits for local people and organisations.

Councillor Blamire proposed, seconded by Councillor Barry:

“(1) That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet note the commissioning process undertaken for services identified in the Council's Delivery and Commissioning Plan.
- (2) That Member Panel recommendations for services to be supported be approved and service and financial arrangements agreed with delivery partners, subject to normal contractual requirements and the overall budget approved by Council.
- (3) That the General Fund Revenue budget be updated to reflect the recommendations in the report.

Officers responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Community Engagement
 Head of Governance
 Head of Resources

Reasons for making the decision:

The recommendations were consistent with the Council's Priorities and Outcomes, as identified in the Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015, specifically Community Leadership - “The voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) has capacity to deliver services for the district”. The recommendations also supported the Council's intention “to protect the most vulnerable in our society.”

135 STOREY CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CENTRE: PROGRESS UPDATE**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hanson)**

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Resources to provide an update on the position regarding the Storey Creative Industries Centre (CIC).

As the report was presented primarily for information no options were presented.

In response to questions Members were advised that it was anticipated that a business plan would be available for consideration by Cabinet on 28 May 2013. It was noted that volunteers had undertaken some work on the gardens with a Storey garden 'open day' planned for May.

Councillor Blamire proposed, seconded by Councillor Hanson:-

“(1) That the report be noted.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

(1) That the report be noted.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Head of Resources

Reasons for making the decision:

At its meeting on 9 October 2012 Cabinet requested that written updates on the Storey Creative Industries Centre (CIC) be tabled at each meeting.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Liz Bateson, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582047 or email
ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk**

MINUTES PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY 14 MARCH, 2013.

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:
FRIDAY 22 MARCH, 2013.**