

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 26 January 2022, when the following Members were present:-

Mike Greenall (Mayor)	Tony Anderson
Paul Anderton	Fabiha Askari
Richard Austen-Baker	Mandy Bannon
Phillip Black	Gerry Blaikie
Alan Biddulph	Victoria Boyd-Power
Dave Brookes	Keith Budden
Roger Cleet	Darren Clifford
Tim Dant	Roger Dennison
Gina Dowding	Adrian De La Mare
Jason Firth	Kevin Frea
Andrew Gardiner	Jake Goodwin
Mel Guilding	Tim Hamilton-Cox
Colin Hartley	Tricia Heath
Ross Hunter	Caroline Jackson
Joan Jackson	Debbie Jenkins
Mandy King	Jack Lenox
Erica Lewis	Cary Matthews
Abi Mills	Stuart Morris
Jean Parr	Faye Penny
Joyce Pritchard	Robert Redfern
Oliver Robinson	Alistair Sinclair
Paul Stubbins	Luke Taylor
Malcolm Thomas	Sandra Thornberry
Katie Whearty	David Whitaker
Anne Whitehead	John Wild
Jason Wood	Peter Yates
Joanna Young	

98 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Abbott Bryning, Merv Evans, June Greenwell, Janice Hanson, Geoff Knight and Sarah Knight.

99 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2021 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Councillor Gardiner made a statement at the conclusion of this item to enquire about how the Mayor would take votes during the meeting. The Mayor informed him that ten members could request a recorded vote if they wished. Councillor Wood then attempted to raise a point of order regarding voting procedure, however the Monitoring Officer's advice was that a point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of the Council Procedure Rules or the law. The Councillor had to indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. As Councillor Wood could not do this the Mayor moved on to the next item.

100 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members advised of the following interests at this stage:

Councillors Gardiner, Morris, Parr and Lewis each declared an "other interest", as defined in Section 2 of the Councillors Code of Conduct, in Item 12 The Lancashire County Deal/Our New Deal for a Greater Lancashire. This was in view of their role as Elected Members of Lancashire County Council. (Minute No.107 refers.)

101 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

The Mayor advised that no questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11.

102 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES

The Mayor informed Members that no petitions or requests to address Council had been received from members of the public.

103 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader presented her report updating Members on various issues since her last report to Council. She informed Members that a decision had been omitted from the list of decisions taken by Cabinet on 18th January 2022. This was a decision regarding Morecambe Sparkle 2022/2025.

The Leader then responded to a number of questions from Councillors.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

104 UPDATE ON BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Councillor Whitehead, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, presented an update report on the Budget and Policy Framework, seeking approval for a City Council Tax increase for 2022/23,

The Mayor reminded Members that proposals regarding the setting of Council Tax would require a recorded vote, in compliance with Regulations and the City Council's Constitution (Council Procedure Rule 19.7).

There were no questions regarding the report.

Councillor Whitehead, seconded by Councillor Hamilton-Cox, proposed:

"That a City Council Tax increase of £5 to the Band D Council Tax (from £236.95 to £241.95) for 2022/23 be approved, together with a year on year target of the maximum allowable under the Government's local referendum thresholds for future years."

There was a short debate, before a vote was taken and recorded as follows:-

For the proposition:

Councillors Anderson, Anderton, Askari, Austen-Baker, Bannon, Biddulph, Black, Blaikie, Boyd-Power, Brookes, Budden, Cleet, Dant, De La Mare, Dennison, Dowding, Firth, Frea, Gardiner, Goodwin, Greenall, Guilding, Hamilton-Cox, Hartley, Heath, Hunter, Jackson (Caroline), Jackson (Joan), Jenkins, King, Lenox, Lewis, Matthews, Mills, Morris, Parr, Penny, Pritchard, Redfern, Robinson, Sinclair, Stubbins, Taylor, Thomas, Thornberry, Whearty, Whitaker, Whitehead, Wild, Wood, Yates and Young. (52)

There were no votes against and no abstentions.

(NB: The result was initially announced as 53 for the proposition, however this was corrected by the Mayor during the next item.)

Resolved unanimously:

That a City Council Tax increase of £5 to the Band D Council Tax (from £236.95 to £241.95) for 2022/23 be approved, together with a year on year target of the maximum allowable under the Government's local referendum thresholds for future years.

105 MOTION ON NOTICE - ENERGY COSTS

During this item, two declarations of interest were made. Councillor Young declared an "other interest" as defined in Section 2 of the Councillors Code of Conduct, in view of her role as the Chair of Trustees at the Morecambe Bay Foodbank. Councillor Whitaker declared an "other interest" as a volunteer and member of Eggcup Food Club.

"This council recognises that households are facing increased energy costs due to the recent increase of the energy price cap and its imminent extension in April 2022.

With bills set to increase as much as 57%, we understand that many residents may find it extremely difficult to meet their energy costs. For those on the lowest incomes, this may lead to a choice between heating and eating.

To demonstrate what is already happening, on 12th January 2022, the Morecambe Bay

Foodbank received two calls in a single morning from distressed residents who were unable to pay their bills, and were seeking help with emergency food as a result. Charities in our area including Citizens Advice, Eggcup, The Morecambe Bay Foodbank and the Morecambe Bay Credit Union are all seriously concerned about how vulnerable people will be able to manage their money in the coming months, especially due to the recent cut to Universal Credit and the impending end of the Household Support Grant in March 2022.

This Council calls on the government to take action to help those who are likely to suffer as a result of these price rises. Specifically this council will write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Levelling Up to ask, along with Citizens Advice, that

- An "Energy Support Grant" should be delivered through the benefits system to provide a much needed £300 (as recommended by the Resolution Foundation) to help with fuel costs, paid to all Universal Credit and Legacy Benefit and pension credit claimants in April 2022.
- The benefits increase due in April 2022 is based on the IFS (Institute of Fiscal Studies) recommendation of 6% rather than the planned rise of 3.1% to more accurately reflect the cost of living
- The Warm Homes Discount should be extended to channel money directly to those that need it most, enabling them to heat their homes in Winter 2022, when prices are due to soar further
- The cost of supplier failures should be spread over two or three years to reduce the cost and provide relief to consumers in the short term."

The motion was accompanied by a briefing note drafted by officers. This provided some local background information.

Councillor Young replied to a number of questions from Councillors. Debate then followed.

At the conclusion of the debate the Mayor called for a vote was taken and the motion was clearly carried with 47 Members voting in favour, none against and five abstentions.

Resolved:-

This council recognises that households are facing increased energy costs due to the recent increase of the energy price cap and its imminent extension in April 2022.

With bills set to increase as much as 57%, we understand that many residents may find it extremely difficult to meet their energy costs. For those on the lowest incomes, this may lead to a choice between heating and eating.

To demonstrate what is already happening, on 12th January 2022, the Morecambe Bay Foodbank received two calls in a single morning from distressed residents who were unable to pay their bills, and were seeking help with emergency food as a result. Charities in our area including Citizens Advice, Eggcup, The Morecambe Bay Foodbank and the Morecambe Bay Credit Union are all seriously concerned about how vulnerable people will be able to manage their money in the coming months, especially due to the recent cut to Universal Credit and the impending end of the Household Support Grant in March 2022.

This Council calls on the government to take action to help those who are likely to suffer as a result of these price rises. Specifically, this council will write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Levelling Up to ask, along with Citizens Advice, that

- An "Energy Support Grant" should be delivered through the benefits system to provide a much needed £300 (as recommended by the Resolution Foundation)

to help with fuel costs, paid to all Universal Credit and Legacy Benefit and pension credit claimants in April 2022.

- The benefits increase due in April 2022 is based on the IFS (Institute of Fiscal Studies) recommendation of 6% rather than the planned rise of 3.1% to more accurately reflect the cost of living
- The Warm Homes Discount should be extended to channel money directly to those that need it most, enabling them to heat their homes in Winter 2022, when prices are due to soar further
- The cost of supplier failures should be spread over two or three years to reduce the cost and provide relief to consumers in the short term.

106 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Independent Remuneration Panel had carried out an annual review of the Councillors' Allowances Scheme and submitted its report for consideration.

The Head of Democratic Services responded to questions about the report.

Councillor Dennison proposed:

"That the recommendations in the report be approved."

This was seconded by Councillor Gardiner.

There was a short debate and, when a vote was taken, the proposal was carried unanimously.

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the basic allowance in the Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2021/22 be increased in line with the employee pay award (when agreed) and backdated to 1 April 2021.
- (2) That, save for the change detailed in (1) above, and any other pay award which may be granted for employees for 2022/23, the Councillors' Allowances Scheme should remain unchanged in 2022/23.

107 LANCASHIRE COUNTY DEAL / OUR NEW DEAL FOR A GREATER LANCASHIRE

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Caroline Jackson, had submitted a report to provide Council with an update on work undertaken towards development of strengthened joint working, a long term strategic plan and a County Deal for the Lancashire area and to support progression of this work.

After presenting her report, the Leader responded to questions from Councillors.

Councillor Caroline Jackson, seconded by Councillor Dowding, proposed:

"That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved."

Councillor Lewis proposed the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Wood:

"That the Council

- 1) Notes the outline "Our New Deal for a Greater Lancashire" at Appendix A of the report as a suggested initial draft basis for further discussion and development of a possible County Deal for the Lancashire area. It is, however, this council's position devolution discussions should seek similar powers, freedoms, and resources for Lancastrians as existing arrangements in the North West most notably Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region.
- 2) (remains as written)
- 3) Agrees that the Leader of the Council continues to work with Lancashire Leaders to develop an initial proposal in consultation with councillors, residents, local businesses, trade unions, organisations and institutions, and notes that any formal proposals will require approval by Cabinet and/or Full Council at the appropriate time.

The was debate on the amendment before a vote was taken. With 14 voting for the amendment, 34 against and two abstentions, the amendment was clearly lost.

The original motion was then debated and voted upon.

The proposition was clearly carried with 36 votes for, 14 against and 1 abstention.

Resolved:

That Lancaster City Council

- (1) Supports the outline "Our New Deal for a Greater Lancashire", at Appendix 1 of the report, as the initial draft basis for further discussion and development of a possible County Deal for the Lancashire area.
- (2) Agrees the principles of governance, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, for any future deal.
- (3) Agrees that the Leader of the Council continues to work with Lancashire Leaders in line with the principles agreed in recommendations 1 & 2 above and notes that any formal proposals will be considered by Cabinet and/or Full Council at the appropriate time.

At the conclusion of this item, the Mayor called for a ten minute break, in line with Council procedure rules. The Meeting adjourned at 8.10pm and reconvened at 8.20pm.

108 CLIMATE EMERGENCY LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Councillor Dowding, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Place Making presented a report on the Climate Emergency review of the Local Plan submitted by the Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration.

Councillor Dowding responded to Councillors' questions, before proposing:

"That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved."

Councillor Hamilton-Cox seconded the motion and debate followed. When debate had concluded, the Mayor called for a vote to be taken on the proposition.

The proposition was clearly carried with 48 votes in favour, none against and one

abstention.

Resolved:

- (1) That Council formally publishes the Climate Emergency Review of the Local Plan; comprising a revised Strategic Policies & Land Allocations DPD and a revised Development Management DPD, accompanied by evidence, a Sustainability Appraisal, and a Habitats Regulation Assessment. Then, once formal representations have been received, submit the documents and representations to the Government in order that they can be the subject of an independent Examination by a government appointed Inspector. This will ensure that the relevant regulations for plan preparation are followed and will enable all stakeholders to make representations about the soundness of the plan and its preparation process.
- (2) To delegate to the Director of Economic Growth & Regeneration the authority to make minor changes to the DPDs that accompany this report prior to their formal publication and submission where that would improve the clarity, consistency, and appearance of the documents. Minor changes may include the insertion of additional illustrative material or non-consequential factual updates.
- (3) Upon submission enable the Service Manager – Planning and Housing Strategy to proceed with facilitating the independent Examination process including through; the appointment of a Programme Officer; engaging with the Planning Inspectorate and the appointed Inspector in correspondence; engaging specialist consultancy support where it would be advantageous to advancing the submitted plan; and, advancing consultation on proposed modifications at the Inspector's suggestion, where, in the event of issues of soundness being identified at Examination, the Inspector is minded to explore whether the submitted documents are capable of being made sound through modification. The Service Manager – Planning and Housing Strategy will report to members on processes in relation to any such changes as soon as reasonably appropriate.
- (4) That Council acknowledges that the task of advancing the Climate Emergency Review of the Local Plan through to adoption has resource implications that will evolve as challenges to the submitted plan emerge and evolve; the Director of Economic Growth & Regeneration will need both capacity and flexibility to ensure that resources are available and deployed, particularly in financial year 2021/22 to address challenges.

109 EXECUTIVE SCHEME OF DELEGATION (Pages 10 - 11)

The Leader informed Council of changes to Cabinet portfolios which were detailed in the report. It was noted that Tourism and Marketing was included in Councillor Thornberry's portfolio in the report, when this should be in Councillor Heath's portfolio. A revised list is included with these minutes for clarity.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

110 APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR ELECT

The Chief Executive advised that he had contacted Councillor Geoff Knight, being the most senior Member of the City Council, who had indicated that he did not feel able to accept an invitation to be Mayor at the present time.

The Chief Executive had therefore spoken to Councillor Pritchard, being the next most senior Member of the City Council and she had indicated that she would be happy to accept the office of Mayor if offered by the Council.

It was then moved by Councillor Hunter and seconded by Councillor Redfern:

“That Councillor Pritchard be invited to hold the office of Mayor of the City of Lancaster for the Municipal Year 2022/23.”

The Mayor declared the motion clearly carried when put to the vote.

Resolved:-

That Councillor Pritchard be invited to hold the office of Mayor of the City of Lancaster for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

111 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Head of Democratic Services reported the following changes since the last Council meeting:

Councillor Joan Jackson had given up her Conservative Group seats on the Appeals and Licensing Committees.

Councillor Austen-Baker had given up his Conservative Group seats on the Appeals and Standards Committees.

Councillor Goodwin had been appointed a substitute member for Planning Committee for the Morecambe Bay Independents.

Councillor Jenkins had been appointed a substitute member for the Planning Committee for the Independent Group.

Councillor Gardiner asked for the following changes to be noted from the Conservative Group:

Councillor Gardiner to take up vacant seats on both the Appeals and Standards Committees.

Councillors Gardiner and Budden to replace Councillors Austen-Baker and De La Mare on the Chief Executive Recruitment Committees.

Councillor Robinson asked for the following change to be noted from the Labour Group:

Councillor Wood to replace Councillor Lewis on the Personnel Committee.

Resolved:

That the changes be noted.

112 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 (Pages 12 - 15)

The Mayor advised that 5 questions had been received by the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rules as follows:

- (1) Councillor Stubbins to Councillor Caroline Jackson regarding the International Labour Organisation's Violence and Harassment Convention (ILO C190).
- (2) Councillor Budden to Councillor Brookes regarding roadside weeds.

- (3) Councillor Budden to Councillor Dowding regarding the Frontierland site.
- (4) Councillor Hartley to Councillor Brookes regarding single use plastics.

Details of the questions and answers are appended to the minutes.

113 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2021. Councillor Lewis responded to Members' questions regarding her portfolio area of Corporate Services.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

Mayor

(The meeting finished at 9.05 a.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,
please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - email dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk**

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS – LIST OF RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

Councillor Caroline Jackson

Leader

- Principal Spokesperson
- Lead on Establishment & Achievement of Council Priorities & Principles
- Human Resources
- Fair Work Charter - Good Jobs & Fair Pay
- Community Safety Partnership
- Community Engagement including Community Connectors
- Levelling Up

Councillor Dave Brookes

Environmental Services

- Waste and Recycling
- Parks and Green Spaces
- Commons, Reserves, Open Spaces
- Water including Rivers and Coast
- Nature Conservation
- Biodiversity
- Street Cleansing
- Environmental Health & Enforcement
- Allotments, Food Production and Food Waste

Councillor Gina Dowding

Planning and Place Making

- Active Transport & Modal Shift
- Planning including Local Plan
- Conservation & Urban Design
- Transport Policy and Parking – Air Quality
- Council-owned Community Facilities
- Development and Building Control
- Compulsory Purchase
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Emergency Response, Community Resilience and Recovery

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox

Sustainable Economic Prosperity

- Sustainable Business and Innovation Support
- Asset and Property Management
- Green Jobs & Skills
- Digital Strategy
- Community Wealth Building - Local Supply Chains
- ICT

Councillor Tricia Heath

Economic Recovery

- Business Recovery
- Business Development in Morecambe
- Tourism and Marketing

Councillor Kevin Frea – Deputy Leader

Climate Action

- Community Action
- Stakeholder Partnerships
- Energy
- Rural Communities & AONB
- Climate Change Resilience

Councillor Dr Erica Lewis

Corporate Services

- Facilities Management
- Legal Services
- Democratic Services (Democratic Support, Civic, Mayoral & Elections)
- Customer and Advice Services
- Governance
- Flood Prevention
- South Lancaster Growth/HIF

Councillor Cary Matthews

Housing

- Council Housing
- Homelessness
- Private Sector Housing
- Social Housing
- Caravan Sites
- Traveller Sites
- Refugee Housing
- Household Support and Resilience

Councillor Sandra Thornberry

Arts, Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing

- Arts, Culture, Festivals and Events
- Museums
- Visitor Information Centres
- Sport and Leisure
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Equalities & Social Justice Initiatives including age; disability; race; religion or belief; sex, gender or gender identity

Councillor Anne Whitehead

Finance and Resources

- Strategic Control of Financial Resources
- Treasury Management
- Procurement and Fair Trade
- Audit and Risk Register
- Financial Services
- Revenues & Benefits

Council meeting 26 January 2022**Questions on notice from Members**

- (1) **From Councillor Stubbins to the Leader:** *On 15 December 2021 Parliament gave the Government the green light to sign up to the first treaty to address harassment and violence in the world of work – the International Labour Organisation’s Violence and Harassment Convention, otherwise known as ILO C190.*

The convention comes into force one year after the date of the UK’s ratification and is legally binding, thus employers should take clear steps now to ensure they are fully in line with the new treaty. The Government has also said it will introduce a new proactive duty requiring employers to protect employees from harassment by third parties, for example customers or clients, which means that staff in public-facing roles who are more likely to be subjected to harassment and violence will finally have better protection.

Specifically, the Council should:

- *Review all staff policies to mitigate the risk of harassment and violence at work*
- *Ensure that a clear and transparent policy against harassment and violence is known and available to employees, and acted upon if complaints are received*
- *Use its influence to encourage local businesses to review and improve their policies on violence and harassment in the workplace.*

Do you agree with me that it is important for our Council to show it will be a beacon of best practice on this and to lead the way so others can follow?

The Leader replied:

The Council’s Dignity at Work Policy sets out its deep commitment to supporting its employees and contains a clear and robust procedure to address any issues that may arise.

The Customer Services Charter sets out the Council’s commitment to the highest quality customer service, whilst also setting expectations of residents in contact with Council officers. This is further supported by a Complaints Policy which provides protection from abusive or unreasonable complaints.

Further work to develop and implement best practice in this area will be undertaken both internally and through partnership working as the Council takes a leading role in initiatives such as the Fair Work Charter and Morecambe Bay Anchor Collaborative.

- (2) **From Councillor Budden to Councillor Brookes:** *For several years now Lancaster District has been strewn with roadside weeds. Can anything be done to clear them and keep the area clear?*

Councillor Brookes replied:

As you know, the County Council has responsibility for maintaining highways infrastructure in the district, which includes the vast majority of roads, verges, bridges, pavements, footpaths and cycleways. The City Council undertakes some of this work as part of a public realm contract, including mowing verges and maintaining

street trees. The City Council gave the County Council notice in late 2019 that it no longer wished to undertake the weed treatment elements of the contract, partly because of a reluctance to continue using glyphosate herbicide, and partly because the funding provided was only about a quarter of the cost of providing a basic service.

As a result of this, responsibility for weed treatment returned to the County Council at the end of the 2019/20 financial year. Unfortunately, this coincided with the onset of the Covid pandemic and the initial lockdown, which forced councils to significantly reprioritise service delivery. The result of this was minimal weed treatment in 2020. The County Council did eventually get a contract for planned weed treatment in place in 2021, but it was late in the growing season and had a limited geographical coverage. The County Council did also carry out an element of reactive weed treatment in response to complaints about specific locations.

Clearly, what happened in 2020 and 2021 was not good enough, and residents are understandably concerned that this might repeat in 2022. We are too, and we arranged to meet with County Council officers at the end of last year to discuss their intentions and how the City Council could work with them to provide a much improved service. We had a very positive meeting where some principles were agreed, including the need for a substantially increased allocation of resources, a hybrid approach with both City and County contributing, and a need to particularly target prestige areas and areas where the nature of the infrastructure leads to higher weed growth. City and County officers were commissioned to work together to develop a detailed plan in good time to get a much earlier start on tackling weeds this year.

In terms of the City Council's contribution, we have included a figure for additional Public Realm resource in our budget proposals. Our understanding is that County officers have also requested that a significantly increased sum be included in the County Council's budget. Understandably, County officers are unable to confirm their plans until after the budget has been through Council. City and Council officers are due to meet again in mid-February. Our officers have also expressed their eagerness to be involved in a County Council Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Public Realm across the County.

In the meantime, the County Council has continued to respond to specific issues. As an example I believe that the clumps of buddleia growing out of Skerton Bridge have now been removed. The advice from County is to use the 'Report It' system on the County Council's website to flag up areas that need attention. Similarly, the City Council will continue to support residents who want to tidy up their area, and will supply tools and remove waste on request. Contact publicrealm@lancaster.gov.uk to arrange this.

(3) From Councillor Budden to Councillor Dowding: *Do we have any plans in the short/medium/ long term for the future of the Frontierland site?*

Councillor Dowding explained that a regeneration strategy for Morecambe was currently being prepared, which would consider all of the work undertaken to date and bring together an achievable phasing strategy around key Council assets and wider development priorities/opportunities. Set against this strategic context, options

would be developed around short, medium and longer term opportunities. It was very much a 'work in progress' but work had started on ideas for the site. It would also consider potential sources of future funding for Morecambe, including any government decision on Eden North. Councillor Dowding assured Councillor Budden that this was important for local people and she would be pushing for it to move forward sooner rather than later.

(4) From Councillor Hartley to Councillor Brookes: *Please can the Cabinet member provide an update on single use plastic reduction in our district?*

Councillor Brookes replied:

You and I were both members of the Plastics Working Group that ran in the last year of so of the previous Council term, before being wound up and folded into the wider carbon reduction agenda following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency. Good progress had already been made at that point and the work didn't stop, although there is still some room for improvement.

Like carbon reduction, single use plastic reduction falls into three broad categories: direct use by the Council, chiefly at its own catering venues; indirect uses associated with the Council such as festivals and markets; and use in the wider community across the district. I'll start with Council venues.

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre sells drinks in cans only, including water, and has installed recycling bins to separate the waste. It also sells reusable water bottles and has installed water fountains to complement this.

Williamson Park café currently uses paper or fully compostable cups. Other items are mostly a mix of plastic alternatives or compostable bioplastics, achieving about an 80% reduction in plastic use. Allergen legislation changes have meant the temporary reintroduction of individually wrapped tray bakes, but the supplier is working on other options. On-site composting is being looked at.

The Storey Printroom Café and the Ashton Hall both have no single-use plastics in use. I was disappointed to learn that the Platform has been using single-use plastic 'glasses', albeit mitigated slightly by in-venue recycling bins. It doesn't use glass or cans for safety reasons and compostable bioplastic glasses don't comply with weights and measures legislation, but I have pointed out that there are reusable plastic options, and was told that these are being investigated.

Going beyond direct operations, Light Up Lancaster has signed up with Julie's Bicycle, a charity that works with the cultural sector on sustainable best practice. This will look at single use plastic as well as water and power consumption, travel, print etcetera. It will look to establish a baseline and an action plan for improvements. This will then be shared with other local event organisers.

Highest Point has taken significant steps forward since it first started. Last year canned alcohol and water was offered and further steps are being taken, with an intention to learn from Light Up.

Other events and concessions are being encouraged and supported to reduce single use plastic. Many new leases now have this written in as an agreement.

In the wider community, drinking water fountains have been installed in a number of locations to encourage the use of refilling reusable water bottles, although these were temporarily shut off to support pandemic infection control. Unfortunately, a workable location in Lancaster city centre has yet to be identified, but a fountain is in stock and this is still being work on.

More broadly the Council is a partner in Lancaster University's Plastic Packaging in People's Lives research project, which is looking at the whole life cycle of plastics, from production to disposal.