



**LANCASTER**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

*Promoting City, Coast & Countryside*

# **COUNCIL MEETING**

**Wednesday, 27 April 2022 - 6.00**

**p.m.**

**Morecambe Town Hall**

*Lancaster City Council welcomes members of the public to attend meetings. However, space is limited and we do intend to livestream the meeting for viewers using MS Teams. A link to the livestream is [HERE](#).*

Mark Davies,  
Chief Executive,  
Town Hall,  
Dalton Square,  
LANCASTER,  
LA1 1PJ



# LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

*Promoting City, Coast & Countryside*

Sir/Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Lancaster City Council to be held in the Town Hall, Morecambe on Wednesday, 27 April 2022 commencing at 6.00 p.m. for the following purposes:

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **MINUTES**

To receive as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the City Council held on 16 March 2022 (previously circulated).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations by Councillors of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Councillors are reminded that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Whilst not a legal requirement, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 and in the interests of clarity and transparency, Councillors should declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, at this point in the meeting.

In accordance with Part B Section 2 of the Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to declare the existence and nature of any other interests as defined in paragraphs 8(1) or 9(2) of the Code of Conduct.

4. **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

5. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements which may be submitted by the Mayor or Chief Executive.

6. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11**

To receive questions in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rules 11.1 and 11.3 which require members of the public to give at least 3 days' notice in writing of questions to a Member of Cabinet or Committee Chairman.

7. **PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

To receive any petitions and/or addresses from members of the public which have been notified to the Chief Executive in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

8. **LEADER'S REPORT** (Pages 5 - 8)

To receive the Cabinet Leader's report on proceedings since the last meeting of Council.

9. **MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 9 - 11)

To receive the Annual Report of the Mayor (*This report was marked "to follow" and was published on 22 April 2022*)

10. **CABINET ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 12 - 36)

To receive the Cabinet's Annual Report containing the Business Progress Reports of the Leader and each Cabinet Member in accordance with Part 2, Section 4 of the Council's Constitution [paragraphs 3.1 (j) and 5.1(m)]. Whilst the Cabinet Annual Report will be published as a separate document in due course, the reports of individual Cabinet Members are included in this agenda and will be presented at the meeting.

11. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 37 - 47)

To receive the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny (*This report was marked "to follow" and was published on 22 April 2022*)

12. **AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 48 - 50)

To receive the Annual Report of the Audit Committee

**MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

13. **MAYORS FOR PEACE** (Pages 51 - 52)

To consider a motion submitted by Councillor Mandy Bannon, seconded by Councillors Kevin Frea, Jason Wood and Joyce Pritchard.

The motion is set out in the agenda papers, accompanied by an officer briefing note as required by the Constitution.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

14. **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW** (Pages 53 - 57)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

15. **APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Group Administrators to report any changes to Committee Membership.

16. **QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12**

To receive questions in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rules 12.2

and 12.4 which require a Member to give at least 3 working days' notice, in writing, of the question to the Chief Executive.

17. **MINUTES OF CABINET** (Pages 58 - 67)

To receive the Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet held 1 March 2022.



.....  
Chief Executive

Town Hall,  
Dalton Square,  
LANCASTER,  
LA1 1PJ

Published on 19 April, 2022.



## Leader's Report

27 April 2022

### Report of the Leader of the Council

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**To receive the report of the Leader of Council.**

##### 1.0 Cabinet

1.1 Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held 1 March 2022, later in this agenda.

##### 2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

2.1 No urgent Cabinet decisions had been taken in this period.

##### 3.0 Leader's Comments

I write this report at the darkest time I can remember, with war in Ukraine in its second month, frightening cost of living rises affecting everyone but especially those on low incomes, government here and across the world still unable to grasp the reality of climate crisis. And Covid affecting up to one in 12 of us, disrupting services, businesses and healthcare.

Despite all, we have people all around us still doing a fantastic job – I hope this report does some justice to them.

##### Cabinet

I start with a sincere apology. When I presented the list of portfolio responsibilities in January 2022 I omitted Plan 2030 from Cllr Lewis portfolio and compounded this by failing to rectify the oversight through mentioning it in the March report. I now correct that error and will ask that it be minuted. Cllr Lewis has of course continued work on Plan 2030 and recent meetings will move the work on into refining both our decision-making and monitoring of quarterly outcomes and bringing it more into line with the UN

Sustainable Development Goals. During March cabinet members were pleased to receive an inspirational presentation from Karime Hassan MBE, Chief Executive of Exeter city council. Karime's creation of the Exeter Futures stakeholder group has enabled a very similar district to achieve significant change and development. We also were briefed on the progress made with the Climate Emergency Local Plan review documents and the proposed Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme. The scheme will support those not entitled to receive the government Energy Rebate and give small top up payments for those who do receive it but are in most need.

Having successfully completed this year's budget, the needs of future years required immediate attention. The Leader, portfolio holder for Finance and senior officer team have begun working with Grant Thornton on the first phase of a scheme for outcome-based resourcing which will report in six weeks' time. Finally, cabinet members joined a good turn out of city councillors for a thought-provoking meeting about the committee system. Ian Parry left us both more aware of how local democracy worked and especially where it did not work well and with some new perspectives and new ways of working to try, whether we adopt a committee system or not. We look forward to the further contact with Ian as the committee on committees gets on with its brief.

### **Matters beyond our borders**

The Levelling Up whitepaper did not give a local government organisation acceptable to most districts, unitaries and county. Government ministers are now too occupied with Ukraine to progress changes in any authorities. In the meantime, all authorities in Lancashire have agreed to create a framework for working together in the future, whatever the form of local democracy. Leaders and Chief Executives met together to consider the vision for the future, the key ambitions we had for Lancashire and how we could work on these together. There was general appreciation and enthusiasm for the new approach which will be taken up again after the May elections.

I attended the South Lakeland Partners dinner as a guest of their Chamber. Many of the members and officers were those involved in our failed bid to create the Bay unitary and are now facing new elections for much larger wards as they create the shadow authority for Westmoreland and Furness. There is still enthusiasm for working closely with Lancaster once the new authorities are created.

### **Staff matters, retirements and recruitment**

At the end of March we said goodbye to Kieran Keane as Chief Executive with much appreciation and some sadness after his five years with us. At the same time, we welcomed Mark Davies, after a rigorous selection process stepping up from his director role. Mark has made a name for himself and Lancaster district, working alongside Cllr Kevin Frea on the Climate Action agenda and we look forward to his energy and enthusiasm in tackling the progress of the council on multiple fronts. In appreciating the recruitment of our new Chief executive, I must also appreciate the hard work put in by the recruitment committee and our interim HR manager Arshaluse Gougazian, over a number of months. Staff matters are always a concern for members and it is good to see the progress being made on the Fair Work charter, led by Cllr Wood and supported by HR staff. The legacy of lockdown is still making itself felt in various parts of our buildings where desks are only just be restored to use and systems for maintaining an open door for residents and members can break down and leave us sitting on the Town Hall steps. All leaders of the seven political groups requested and received a briefing on the Working Well Project; we have been assured that the situation for staff will be

finalised and presented to cabinet shortly, whilst the re-opening of the town halls will also be a priority.

## **Eden**

Just a short note this month – all the Eden partners were delighted to see that the Levelling Up Fund round 2 prospectus included opportunity to bid for a £50 million funding pot. There are only two of these awards available so work is underway between partners to create an amazing and compelling bid by the 6<sup>th</sup> July closing date.

## **Communities. Community meetings and events**

This month has brought some serious concerns about anti-social behaviour in both Lancaster and Morecambe including evidence of victimisation and hate crime. By the time of the council meeting the Community Safety Partnership will have brought together local agencies to work together both to support victims, help with enforcement and to ensure support for some of the vulnerable young people involved. Members attended a briefing on domestic abuse scheduled to follow up the motion on misogyny passed last November. This month's Community Conversation was planned and run by young people from Stanley's in Morecambe and Escape2Make. It was professionally and humorously carried out, with expert help from officers especially Jamie Murphy and provided a lot of insight into young people's concerns. I am looking forward to the next one already. We raised the Commonwealth Flag with some difficulty this year due to a broken flagpole in Morecambe after the gales and having to use the Memorial Garden in Lancaster and crane our necks to see the flag appear. It was good to see Pam Barker attending as Lord Shuttleworth's representative to read the Commonwealth Affirmation.

## **Significant district developments**

A very rapid bid was put together to support Carnforth as the site for the HQ of Great British Railways. As a rail heritage site, with space for new building and the capability to be on both direct north/south and east/west rail communication the site has much to recommend it. The bid received support from both our local MPs. But we note we have forty- one competitors in the first round. The new hospitals project has also progressed so that we know there is a possibility of a new Lancaster hospital on a site elsewhere than RLI but we will be in competition with Preston in putting forward plans. A further briefing for all councillors will be provided in April. Officers met with cabinet members to discuss the progress towards action in the development of Morecambe, especially the Frontierland site. Strategies need clarification and a further meeting is planned.

## **Low carbon futures**

A select number of members and officers attended a guided tour of the community – led housing scheme being constructed in Halton. The development of twenty passivhaus standard affordable houses is outstanding in conception and design and matched by the enthusiasm and expertise of the construction company. The whole project has repaid the extensive support provided by officers, especially in the early stages. A number of councillors attended a presentation by Dean O'Connor at NanoSUN, an expanding Lancaster company on the Caton Road Business Park, developing the infrastructure to enable on-site delivery of hydrogen to power larger vehicles such as bin wagons. The technology was hugely impressive as was the commitment to growing the company in the Lancaster district. Finally, but definitely not least we had an APSE meeting at Salt Ayre drawing attendance from all over the north of England because it included a tour of the new energy system. Officers from other councils left both envious and inspired.

**Community standout**

Four items stand out for me this month as immensely typical of the positive spirit of people in this district. The first was to visit Kevin in Primrose Street in Morecambe which must have the most beautiful back alley in the district, to make a video for the Great British Spring Clean. He is a great inspiration. The second was the response from our district to the government scheme to house Ukrainian refugees – 18 homes matched and most of them already visited and assessed by officers. Whilst at the same time city and county officers with our City of Sanctuary volunteer and third sector partners swung into action to meet the needs of over 150 asylum seekers placed in a Lancaster district hotel by the Home Office at extremely short notice. Lastly there was an event sponsored by Marcus Angell of Silver Door and supported by city officers and members along with a large number of businesses, to set in motion the creation of a CIC to get together funds to repair and refurbish Queen Victoria and enhance and develop Dalton Square as a community outdoor space.

So dark times but amazing energy, activity and resilience in this district. I hope you had a good Easter.

**4.0 Decisions**

The following decisions were considered by Cabinet 12 April 2022:

<b>Supplementary Planning documents to support climate emergency local plan review</b>
<b>Council Tax energy rebate scheme</b>
<b>Gateway, Whitelund Fire Damage Reinstatement &amp; Insurance Matters</b>
<b>Hackney Carriage Fare Review</b>
<b>Morecambe Vision Cabinet Advisory Group</b>

No Officer Delegated Key Decision has been taken since the last Leaders report.

The following Individual Cabinet Member Decisions were taken since the last Leader’s report:

ICMD17	Expression of Interest: Great British Railways HQ	Cllr Caroline Jackson Published on 7.3.22 – call-in waived
ICMD18	Microsoft Enterprise Agreement	Cllr Hamilton-Cox Published on 7.3.22
ICMD19	Demolition Costs	Cllr Caroline Jackson Published on 5.4.22 (exempt)
ICMD20	City Council response to Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan	Cllr Gina Dowding Published on 6.4.22
ICMD21	City Council response to Slyne with Hest Neighbourhood Plan	Cllr Gina Dowding Published on 6.4.22

**Background Papers**

Cabinet agenda of the meeting held on 12 April 2022.



**Annual Report of The Mayor, Councillor Mike Greenall 2021-2022**

It has been an honour and privilege to serve as Mayor of Lancaster in the 2021-2022 civic year.

This year has been a memorable year for myself and my wife Margaret as Mayoress alongside me, and we have enjoyed meeting with all the organisers and volunteers who have worked endlessly throughout the Covid pandemic we have had to suffer throughout the district.

I would like to thank my Deputy Mayor Councillor Geoff Knight who stepped in to cover me when I was not available to carry out some of my duties. I would also like to thank all the officers of Lancaster City Council for their support and service to me and the Mayoress during this mayoral year.

Attending these Mayoral events would not have been possible if it was not for the organising skills of Jenny Kay who made sure we arrived safe and sound to these events and made sure we kept to the covid restriction rules which were still in force whilst she drove us to and from these events which included the wearing of face masks and also to use sanitizing gels.



Our first event we attended was the Olive Branch Foodbank in Lancaster which provided food items to vulnerable people and families and also homeless people and refugees throughout the district and they shared some amazing stories with us.

We also attended the National Hygiene Organisation in Morecambe and in Lancaster who have just started providing vulnerable people, families, homeless people and refugees throughout the district with all types of hygiene products.

We also attended the Induction of Reverend Canon Leah Vasey-Saunders at the Lancaster Priory as Vicar of Lancaster and the High Sheriff's Shield Hanging at Lancaster Castle.

Some events continued with limited numbers and social distancing including the VJ day Memorial, Remembrance Sunday, Nine Lessons and Carols at Lancaster Priory and Holocaust Memorial Day organised by More Music Morecambe. We also attended the Battle of Britain service at St Barnabas Church Morecambe, RBL Pennant Presentation in the Memorial Gardens and Christ Church Lancaster Inaugural Christmas Tree festival.



We have also attended various music events in Morecambe and Lancaster which included More Music in Morecambe where the organisers and volunteers explained what their roles were in training children of all ages how to play different instruments whatever their disabilities. It was amazing to see the outcome of all the hard work at a music evening we attended and also the different projects that they had undertaken.

That same day we then attended a concert by the Haffner Orchestra at Lancaster University which was well attended by the public and it was an enjoyable night listening to the different symphonies of famous composers by this remarkable orchestra.

We also attended the Highest Point Festival at Williamson Park on a Saturday evening and the main star that evening was Rick Astley and it was well supported by the public who enjoyed the music.

In February we were invited to take part in the official opening of the Chinese New Year Celebrations in Lancaster City Centre which was the year of the Tiger and this was really enjoyable.

We have made presentations at various sporting events throughout the district.

- Walking football competitions were held at Heysham Mossgate Astro turf pitch for players over the age of 50 and above which included people with some sort of disability and these events were organised by Mr David Brayshaw.
- We were invited to make a presentation of the Lockstep Trophy to the winners of the four team football competition held at the Giant Axe in Lancaster over two days and the competition was won by Lancaster City F.C and it was a pleasure to present them with the trophy.
- We also made a presentation to Morecambe FC for winning promotion to Division One of the Football League by winning the Division Two play off final at Wembley.
- We then hosted the Mayor of Milton Keynes who came to watch Morecambe FC play his home team MK DONS at the Mazuma Stadium where he saw his team beat Morecambe 4-0.
- We also made a presentation to the winning foursome Golf Team at the Silver Basket Trophy tournament at Lansil Golf Club Lancaster.
- We also were invited to make presentations at the Lancaster Grand Prix Cycle Race which took place around the country lanes on the outskirts of Lancaster over a distance of 99 miles. The race started off from Williamson Park and ended in Williamson Park and the race was won by Josh Whitehead of Team PB Performance.
- Last year we started a Way of the Roses Cycle Race from Morecambe to Bridlington which consisted of 170 miles cycling.



We also made a presentation to Great Britain Paralympic Wheelchair Rugby Gold Medal winners Stuart Robinson and his team mate Ayaz Bhuta who competed at the Tokyo Paralympics at the Salt Ayre Sports Centre where they both trained up to the start of the Paralympics in 2021.

We have also attended two tree planting events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which were held first at Ryelands School with the Lord Lieutenant Lord Shuttleworth and the second tree planting was with the Friends of Ryelands Park on Ryelands Park. We also planted a tree for the Friends of Syria in Williamson Park.

We were invited to a Princes Trust presentation in Lancaster which was organised by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue which involved taking teenagers away on a Outward Bound course in the Snowdonia Park area and each one gave a presentation on what they experienced whilst being on this course.

We also attended a Respect Awards Presentation evening at Lancaster House for the Lancaster Boys and Girls club who went on a outward bound course in the Lake District and they all gave a presentation on what they achieved by doing this course.

We have also attended numerous other events throughout our Mayoral year which are as follows.

- RNLI Morecambe Naming Boat Ceremony
- Mossgate School Student awards presentations
- Caton Road Flood Defence presentation
- West End Road Primary School presentations
- RNLI Lancaster Coffee Morning
- Lancaster Soroptimists International day for Violence against Women
- Torrisholme Trinity Methodist Church unveiling of Plaque
- Silverdoor Charter House Launch Party
- Laurel Bank Care Home Retirement party presentation
- Unveiling of a NHS Thank You Bench at Royal Lancaster Infirmary
- St Thomas Church Community Centre Opening Ceremony in Lancaster
- Lancaster Philately Club Fair
- The Growing Club Presentations
- Bay Volunteers Hope Church Lancaster Presentation
- St John's Awards and Honours for the district of Cumbria and Lancashire

I wish my successor Councillor Joyce Pritchard a successful and happy Mayoral year.

**Annual Report of the Leader of the Council 2021-22**

I recognise the council year 2021-22 has been one of recovery, repair and refocusing. Officers and members picking up on previous responsibilities and projects have counted the cost of the delays and changes that were required for supporting the district so well through lockdown, recovery and the mass vaccination programme. As council leader I appreciate the effort it has taken, and in some areas continues to take, to achieve previous standards and the variable nature of progress across the directorates.

**Establishment & achievement of council priorities & principles**

The new Shared Administration retained continuity with the previous alliance on its priorities and principles through a helpful discussion meeting with officers which established commitment to the previous themes and outcomes and allowed us to make some minor improvements. This came to council in December 2021. The outcomes accepted in early 2020 continue to provide a powerful point of reference in decision-making. We took on an immediate imperative to create a balanced budget for 22/23 alongside a review of the projects we considered to reflect key priorities. The process resulted in a good outcome in terms of a budget that fitted our requirements but illustrated a need for greater financial information for members, presented in more flexible ways, as well as portfolio holders requiring more detailed understanding of underlying strategies, particularly in the regeneration area. Outcomes-based resourcing had been a priority from 2019/20 and with the support of previous CEO Kieran Keane this is now in place to tackle the structural deficit we face over the next 5 years. We are also in the process of strengthening the focus of quarterly monitoring and decision-making to reflect council priorities.

Our priorities in all areas will be covered by other portfolio holders but in terms of taking action on climate change, particular credit goes to Mark Davies team which was seriously affected by Covid but also established itself as a national leader on CO2 reduction. I pay tribute to Cllr Frea, working alongside them whose knowledge and commitment in the area are also nationally recognised.

**Community engagement including community connectors**

During the worst of Covid the level of community engagement achieved over Teams and Zoom was very high. Community connectors have continued to build on this work through establishing the use of the Keep Connected website and working alongside Clare Muir from the NHS to build our community conversations into a wider system of community engagement fed back to decisionmakers across the public and third sector. The community conversation programme has restarted; planned conversations are designed to reflect community concerns and draw in hitherto unheard voices such as young people. Community Connectors continue to engage with a very large number of individuals and organisations across the district to enable events and support funding applications. The Community Connectors role as catalysts for community engagement is developing and, as portfolio holder, I expect to present more analysis of its role later in the year.

**Community Safety Partnership**

CSP meets quarterly to receive data on crime, review local initiatives and decide on funding applications. I was elected as Chair in September 2021. The committee supported the PSPO process completed in December and the setting up of a Community Alcohol Partnership in response to concerns on hospital admissions.

There is strong support for the CSP adopting local priorities relating to antisocial behaviour and violence against women and girls. The Community Safety Partnership presented its report to Overview and Scrutiny in the annual crime and disorder meeting in December 2021. The partnership is working on ways to improve its joint working and become more responsive to local circumstances.



**Human Resources and Fair Work charter**

Human Resources has faced severe difficulties over the last three years in terms of both staffing and leadership. Those officers who have managed through this time deserve credit for their resilience. The appointment of an excellent interim HR Lead in September 2021 resolved long-standing difficulties: administrative support is in place and business partners are able to support departments; policies are being listed for review and proper communication is once more in place with union representatives. The newly recruited HR lead is working on a range of issues. The Fair Work Charter member group, ably led by Cllr Wood, supported by officers, has referred the charter on to Personnel Committee for inclusion within its work programme and agreed to pursue closer work with the Morecambe Bay Anchor Collaborative Charter on its key work and employer elements.

As leader I should like to thank all officers and members for their loyalty, hard work and ingenuity in the face of the myriad of challenges we have faced over the last year and can see will face us in future. Neither time nor circumstances is on our side in terms of our core priorities; what we do have is commitment, kindness and amazing talent. It will see us through.

**Cllr Caroline Jackson**  
**Leader of the Council**

## Annual Report of the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Action 2021-22

### Introduction

Lancaster City Council have made great strides in implementing our Corporate Plan goal of reducing the carbon emissions from our own estate to net zero by 2030. Mark Davies and his team and officers in other departments, including Finance, Planning, Leisure, Procurement, Legal and Property, have worked together to achieve the following:

- **Digital Co2 Dashboard** - this monitors emissions in every area of the council's activities. The Dashboard was key in identifying Salt Ayre as the biggest emitter of all the council's properties, and in identifying and reducing staff travel emissions.
- **Salt Ayre Leisure Centre** is now the UK's first fully off gas Leisure Centre, thanks to a successful £6.8m funding bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. The existing gas boilers have been replaced with air source heat pumps; External LED lighting has been installed and glazing upgraded to reduce energy consumption. A solar farm has also been built on the adjacent disused landfill site at Salt Ayre to generate electricity, which is provided to the Centre using a direct wire.
- **Heat Decarbonisation** We were awarded £150,000 from SALIX to produce a fully appraised/costed heating decarbonisation plan incl. technologies and fabric upgrades needed across the corporate estate to get us to 2030.
- **Building Decarbonisation Projects** across up to 10 sites using >£1m of the underspend from Salt Ayre are to be completed by 30 June 2022.
- **Electric Refuse Vehicles** We have taken delivery of our first electric refuse vehicle and a second is due for delivery shortly.- These will be deployed on our business refuse collections, but can also be used to assess their suitability to replace diesel vehicles on other rounds.
- **EV Fleet Replacement** Council approved a capital replacement programme to 2030 that assumes changing almost every vehicle in our fleet, including refuse trucks, to electric (or hydrogen). Some of our newly acquired electric pool cars have also been made available to the public through the Co-wheels car club.
- **Staff Travel** Our staff travel emissions have gone down from around 35 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/pa to 9.7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/pa this year. Although much of this reduction was due to staff working from home, the introduction of electric vehicles for staff use has also played a part.
- **Heat Networks** We were successful in obtaining a £91,000 Government Heat Networks Delivery Unit grant for a Heat Networks feasibility study. The study will investigate a number of heat network options for several clusters in the Lancaster District, connecting a wide range of potential heat and power consumers and a range of baseload supply technologies.
- **Heysham Gateway:** We are modelling options for roof-mounted solar, sales to tenants and options to use surplus to feed an e-RCV fleet inc. relocations from White Lund Depot
- **Local Area Energy Plan** We have applied for funding to create a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), in collaboration and consultation with Electricity North West and Energy Systems Catapult. A LAEP establishes a basis for assessing or contesting energy developments in local spatial planning applications. It will also provide a framework for targeting investment

and funded programmes directed at fuel poverty and improving building energy performance; a compelling and locally specific narrative for meaningful engagement with local citizens and businesses in the national effort to decarbonise, adding a democratic element to the significant changes ahead; a framework for local areas to achieve local decarbonisation ambitions and assessing and setting local carbon emissions reduction targets; a clear plan to drive local clean growth and job creation and to provide confidence to invest in new energy products, services and infrastructure.

## District Wide Engagement

Our Climate Emergency Motion passed in January 2019 also agreed to work towards making the Lancaster District Zero Carbon within the same timescale;

- **Local Climate Engagement (LCE)** “is a new programme to support local authorities in England to plan, commission and deliver high quality public engagement in their climate decision-making, in a way that benefits both them and their local population”. We have been successful in achieving a place in the Project Group, and will be supported by Shared Futures in delivering a local public engagement project in climate decision-making, building on our experience with the People’s Jury, and to start to embed the approaches and skills needed for future participation work. The programme content includes training for council officers, up to £45,000 of expert time (pro-bono) to support us to plan and deliver a piece of public engagement work, and peer learning sessions.
- **Climate Change Community hub** [This online hub](#) has been set up for residents and others with local connections to share ideas , discuss important topics and contribute to the future of the district.
- **Partnerships:** We’ve asked Exeter City Futures CIC to put together a proposal for their support in establishing our own expression of a local partnership (i.e. learning the lessons from elsewhere while not necessarily lifting the Exeter model wholesale).
- **District Climate Strategy Development:** We’re currently working on the next draft of this, ready to start consultation with members, stakeholders, other potential partners and the wider community.
- **Array Festival 19 May** [The Festival](#) is “a celebration of the incredible enterprise taking place in the Lancaster City region.” Councillor Kevin Frea & Dianne Neville (Principal Planning Officer) gave presentations live at this event held at White Cross alongside Henrik Johansson, Environmental Co-Ordinator at Växjö, our twin city in Sweden.
- **Online Youth Engagement Event 14 July.** Community Connector Carlyne Walsh helped local young people to host this event online with Anita Okunde (former member of the Youth Parliament) and Scarlett Knowles (Youth Mayor for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham). The webinar focused on targeting young people and educating them about big, small and governmental action that can change their future.
- **Walk2Cop26 22 October.** We collaborated with Marketing Lancashire, EDF, Morecambe BID, Morecambe Town Council, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Eden North and a number of other partners to host a public [Walk2Cop26](#) networking event at the Winter Gardens in Morecambe. Speakers included Andy Brown

from the Environment Agency, Martyn Butlin from EDF and Shaun Turner from Lancashire County Council, as well as Councillor Frea.

- **COP26 at Lancaster Festival 25 October** This event 'People Power: Involving Citizens in Climate Policymaking' was hosted at the Storey, with speakers Prof. Rebecca Willis, Councillor Shaun Turner from Lancashire County Council and Councillor Kevin Frea.

## External

- **Municipal Journal Awards 2021** Lancaster City Council was commended for leadership in responding to the climate emergency.
- **The Transport Decarbonisation team at the Department for Transport** included our EV fleet expansion, including Co-Wheels, as a case study in forthcoming government guidance for local authorities on decarbonising transport.
- **APSE Energy** held a site visit and Network meeting at Salt Ayre in March 2022. This was an opportunity to showcase our decarbonised Leisure Centre to more than 30 officers and Councillors from across the UK.
- **EU Climate Neutral Smart Cities:** The EU Commission received 377 Expression of Interests (for 100 places) from EU and other European cities that are aspiring to be climate neutral and smart by 2030. We are awaiting a final decision this month having been shortlisted along with Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, and Newcastle.
- **Net Zero Local Leadership Summit 13 July** We were mentioned by Alok Sharma MP, COP26 President who said *"Whether that is Lancaster City Council electrifying its vehicles, Swansea retrofitting housing stock, or tree planting in the West Midlands. It has been a real pleasure to learn about the work going on around the UK at the meetings of the COP26 UK Mayors and Regions Advisory Council, which we have established to help COP reach every corner of the UK."*
- **UK100 Countryside Climate Network** We are members of this and have participated in a number of meetings throughout the year.
- **Planet Mark zero carbon electric 'battle bus' 13 October.** Councillor Gina Dowding and Councillor Kevin Frea were both interviewed, along with Susanna Dart and Diane Neville from Planning, during the [bus visit to Lancaster University](#) for video presentations that were displayed in the Green Zone at COP26 in Glasgow.
- **Northern Real Farming Conference 2-3 December 2021** Lancaster City Council hosted this [live event at the Storey Institute](#). Sessions included 'Local Food Growing', 'Reimagining our Northern Farming Landscape', 'The Role of Large Scale Grant Funding in Shifting Food Systems', 'Mapping Local Supply Chain Infrastructure' as well as a number of networking sessions and local visits.
- **LGA Climate Leadership Essentials Course 27 April & 17 September** Councillor Kevin Frea was invited to present a session on Lancaster City Councils achievements on this online course for Councillors.
- **LGA/Key Cities Urban Summit March 9 2022** Councillor Kevin Frea was invited to join a panel on 'Decarbonising Our Cities' at the LGA in London.



- Mark Davies met with the Director and Climate Change officer from Blackburn with Darwen on March 4th 2022. They are impressed with our approach to addressing Climate change.

### **Rural Areas**

- Community Connectors have organised regular online meetings throughout the year, to bring together Parish Councils, Community Organisations, Health and other organisations to discuss issues affecting rural areas of the District. These have included our new Grassland Management Strategy, the Local Plan as well as Covid, fly tipping and rural transport.
- **AONB.** Councillor Kevin Frea has been invited to participate in the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' Local Assessment Panel.

### **Cllr Kevin Frea**

**Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Climate Action**

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services 2021-22**

This report is a brief run through some of the highlights of the last year's work in the areas of waste & recycling, street cleansing, parks & green spaces, and public protection.

### **WASTE & RECYCLING**

#### **Priority: moving towards zero residual waste to landfill and incineration**

- Despite continued staffing pressures from the pandemic and national HGV driver shortages, the City Council maintained another year of uninterrupted waste and recycling collections.
- After a very long wait, first of two new fully electric bin wagons now delivered and in use.
- In partnership with Lancashire County Council, a 6-month trial of weekly food waste collection was carried out in Heysham, ahead of central government plans to make it mandatory in 2025. Just under 900 households were involved, with trial providing data on participation rates (36%), waste composition, tonnages, collection time, and allowing County to test its treatment process.
- Route optimisation of collection rounds successfully implemented in September 2021. Currently showing an 11% decrease in distance travelled and 7% decrease in diesel consumption, saving approximately 4 tonnes of CO2 emissions per month.
- Battery recycling added to kerbside collections in April 2022 - £18K funding secured from Lancashire County Council to promote this.
- Continued working with Freegle to encourage reuse/free exchange of unwanted items by promoting Freegle in Your District Council Matters and on the side of bin wagons, and sponsoring our two local groups (Lancaster & Morecambe; Carnforth).

### **STREET CLEANSING**

#### **Priority: keeping our district's neighbourhoods, parks, beaches and open space clean, well maintained, and safe**

- Trial of litter bin sensors in Silverdale implemented, with further rollout now planned.
- Selected litter bins in rural areas being upgraded using £25K WRAP funding.
- Two local recycling points in West End of Morecambe upgraded with improved capacity containers and signage designed to increase participation and reduce side waste issues.
- Fly tipping initiative with Keep Britain Tidy agreed, with staff training underway in April 2022 and programme of interventions targeting some of the worst affected areas to run until October.
- Meetings held with Lancashire County Council requesting a significantly improved level of service on street weeding. Budget allocated to Lancaster was disproportionately low. We understand that the budget has now been increased and a dedicated service commissioned.

### **PARKS & GREEN SPACES**

#### **Priorities: increasing the biodiversity of our district; working in partnership with residents, local organisations and partners, recognising the strengths and skills in our community**

- Grasslands Management Strategy implemented in 2021 with a largely positive response and some localised issues resolved. As well as biodiversity benefits, this has also enabled a restructure of staff into area-based teams, and replacement of seasonal posts with seven new full time positions, increasing operational capacity.
- Partnership with Eden and Playstation to deliver 12 acres of wildflower planting in 2022.
- 5 Green Flag accreditations: Williamson Park, Happy Mount Park, Regent Park, Ryelands Park and Torrisholme Cemetery.

- Making Spaces green space grant programme now largely implemented, with twenty community projects funded.
- Tree Warden scheme launched in December 2021 together with Tree Council funded planting scheme on St Chad's Drive.
- Working with community and friends groups, £250K funding secured for improvements at Ryelands Park, Poulton Park, Crag Bank playground, Torrisholme Park playground, and Greaves Park playground.
- Just under £350K of S106 contributions secured for community playing field improvements.
- White Lund Deport nursery continues to host a growing site for the FoodFutures FarmStart project, training a next generation of market gardeners, and also the Hermitage Field Community Meadow project, which is helping the City Council grow wildflower plug plants to support the Grasslands Management Strategy.

### **PUBLIC PROTECTION**

#### **Priorities: focused on serving our residents, local organisations and district**

- Local electric taxi charging point network installed.
- Successful consultation with taxi drivers on proposals for fare increases, and principles established for future annual reviews.
- Dealt with over 500 enquiries and 1200 complaints about Covid regulations, and carried out almost 3500 Covid advice and compliance visits to businesses over the past two years.
- Introduced and delivered food safety and allergens training service for local businesses to support pandemic recovery.
- Worked with Heysham Port to establish a new border post for inspection of imported goods.

Huge thanks to Will Griffith and Fiona Inston and their teams for their ongoing enthusiasm and commitment to improving services, despite the significant financial, social, and environmental challenges that continue to come our way.

**Cllr Dave Brookes**  
**Cabinet Member for Environmental Services**

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Place 2021 - 2022**

### **Development Management**

Planning application determination rates have been relatively low with service priority being given to staff recruitment and the clearance of the application backlog. Lower grade posts were successfully filled, but recruiting senior officers remains challenging (a national problem in the planning sector). Principal Planning Officer posts therefore remain vacant. However, application determination times are improving through 2022, and the new Pre-Planning Application Advice Service will launch in May. The Team also concluded intensive work on the Eden North planning application - its approval achieving a critical milestone and boosting the project's deliverability and funding business case.

Building Control service, provided by Capita, has developed new partnerships with public and private developers/agents. The Team had a busy year responding to dangerous buildings/sites and undertaking enforcement activity. Recruitment to Building Control posts is pending job evaluation.

### **Planning and Housing Strategy**

The Climate Emergency Local Plan Review (CELPR) has been undertaken to a tight timescale. The CELPR will ensure climate change matters, necessary mitigation, and adaption measures are considered as part of the council's response to declaring a [Climate Emergency](#) and will be subject to formal public examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) created to support the CELPR include Sustainable Transport; Incorporating Green and Blue Infrastructure; Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Generation; Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage; Flood Risk – Sequential and Exception Test; and Provision for Electric Vehicles and Associated Charging Infrastructure. Informal consultation will take place in Spring 2022. Other SPDs in preparation include: Viability Protocol; and Developer Contributions in South Lancaster. SPDs adopted include: Lancaster Canal Quarter Strategic Regeneration framework (November 2021); and Meeting Housing Needs (February 2022).

Evidence and preparation gathering continues for Lancaster South Area Action Plan (LSAAP). The LSAAP will allocate development and reserve land (including areas of separation and for flood mitigation). It will also set out delivery responsibilities for the public and private interests and programme the necessary strategic enabling infrastructure. Parishes and communities supported to advance Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) for adoption in 2022 include: Caton with Littledale; Slyne with Hest; Carnforth; and Aldcliffe with Stodday. Both Wray and Wennington already benefit from adopted NPs. The service continues to prepare Planning Advisory Notes (PANs) on a range of topics, all detailed in the revised and updated [Local Development Scheme](#)

### **Sustainable Transport**

The service continues to influence transport policy at national and regional levels. Officers have been lobbying to ensure Lancaster is a 'stopping station' for HS2 services. The national HS2 Assumptions Report (2020) indicated Lancaster would not be served by direct HS2 trains. However, the updated HS2 Strategic Outline Business Case (January 2022) indicates all options now include Lancaster as a stopping station. Lobbying will continue through 2022/23 when train service patterns are clearer. Alongside local partners, such as Lancaster Civic Vision, officers lobbied for retention of late evening train services between Lancaster and Manchester. Details of the new level of service are to be issued shortly. A bid for Carnforth to become the home of Great British Railways was submitted in March 2022, involving officers from a range of council services.

The service continues to work closely with the county council on major highway proposals, including the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy. Public consultation on Lancaster gyratory options, including changes to bus routing, will follow later in the year. The strategic South Lancaster Growth Catalyst infrastructure project will positively transform the city's urban form, public realm, and air quality. Officers will ensure proposals are informed by local knowledge and are looking at the scope for a sustainable travel stakeholder group. Officers are working with Lancaster District Bus Users Group to improve cleanliness and the user experience at Lancaster Bus Station.

The car parking tariff review (approved April 2022) was amended following stakeholder feedback. Tariffs now better support the night-time economy, cultural sector, and will introduce new permits to assist voluntary groups. Post-pandemic reopening of Dalton Square to traffic and parking spurred the city council, alongside county council, and stakeholders such as Lancaster BID, to explore options for creating a more attractive public space, including permanent pedestrianisation.

### **Lancaster Canal Quarter Masterplan**

Consultants PRP were appointed in December 2021 to deliver the masterplan, following the adoption of the [Canal Quarter Strategic Regeneration Framework](#) (CQSRF) as an SPD in November 2021. After decades of failed private sector-led approaches, the city council is taking a more pro-active role in enabling a fresh approach to future development. Early work has focussed on:

- Integration with the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy proposals.
- Working to join up major third-party landowner/developer aspirations and ideas.
- Reviewing preferred land uses with respect to viability, market demand, and deliverability.
- Assessment of priorities and approach to retention and refurbishment of historic buildings.
- Route to progression of infrastructure, such as area heating network.

Potential identified "early wins" could deliver new housing and commercial development, but challenges remain in securing viable propositions. However, the area has potential to deliver a range of housing types, create a sustainable community, breathe new life into the city centre, and help meet the council's Homes Strategy ambitions. Further stakeholder and community consultation is planned for the summer. The final masterplan should be approved in September 2022.

### **Lancaster High Streets Heritage Action Zone**

The [Heritage Action Zone](#) (HAZ) is 2 years into a 4-year programme with building grant take-up gaining momentum. Extensive improvements to the Grand Theatre façade are underway following earlier repair phases. Public realm ambitions remain focused on Lower Church Street and upper North Road and will progress alongside the proposed changes to the gyratory system. Footpath improvements to the north side Damside Street are scheduled for delivery in summer 2022.

Following previous consultation and review of part one of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP), part two has been finalised for review. The full CMP identifies the HAZ's heritage significance, informing policy and practice through and beyond the HAZ programme. Across Spring/Summer, and following public consultation, 12 green heritage plaques will be placed on important historic buildings. As pandemic restrictions eased the HAZ cultural programme, [Mill Race: Flow of Change](#), delivered a number of community engagement events, helping bring the area's story to life, giving the public new reasons to spend time in the area. The programme made well received links to Light Up Lancaster and two further events are planned

for the end of April. Churches Conservation Trust ambitions to bring St John's Church back into beneficial use were boosted by the advancement of the business case for the building's re-use and an invitation from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to submit a major capital funding bid this year.

**Councillor Gina Dowding**  
**Portfolio Holder for Planning and Place**

## Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Economic Prosperity

### (1) Introduction

As other exec. annual reports will be highlighting, the pandemic has continued to show the Council at its best and I must express my appreciation for the work that officers have invested in responding to the impact of the pandemic on local businesses. Given the imperative to prioritise business grant distribution, this has necessarily impacted on other work in the economic development portfolios. More than 30,000 enquires have come into the business support hub during the course of the pandemic, with the bulk of the enquiries around grant funding support and business advice.

The Council's £15k per year investment in Growth Lancashire Ltd leverages considerable further in-depth business support – to 214 local companies over the past 3 years.

The shape of the SEP portfolio changed over the course of the year but the following is a fair reflection of the breadth of activity.

### (2) Asset and property management

#### 2.1 Commercial property management

An interim statement for 21-22 shows that very nearly 100% of budgeted gross commercial rental income is expected to be received. Over the past 12 months there has been a significant decrease in rent and service charge arrears. Occupancy levels remain very good at around 97% of tenable property. Key highlights are:

Gateway, White Lund. A fire in one unit in January 2022 caused wider damage. But the report to cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> April confirms that all income losses and cost of repairs are expected to be met by the insurance cover. One tenant issue is being worked through presently. Significant additional investment is being planned for the site in 22/23.

Hilmore Way Several expressions of interest are currently being discussed with a view to seeking formal bids this month for the former Frankie&Benny's unit.

The Storey is reporting its best ever financial operating performance (excluding capital charges) at subsidy of just over £29k despite the impact of pandemic earlier in the FY; and the financial forecast for 22/23 is for the Storey to generate an operating profit.

#### 2.2 Asset management and development

1 Lodge Street Revised tenders for refurbishment work were received in the week of writing this report; with new slates having already been ordered because of lead times.

Heysham Gateway Consultants WSP have been appointed to take forward a masterplan and delivery strategy for both the city and county council's land interests on Imperial Road following approval of match funding from Lancashire county council's LERG fund.

Co-op building at Regent Rd., Morecambe The council's partner, the Good Things Collective, has submitted a series of grant bids to the Arts Council and other bodies. An outcome is expected imminently on these.

The Frontierland site has been subject to expressions of interest from a number of commercial developers.

In the face of the structural deficit, the most efficient and effective use of municipal buildings has come back in to focus as pandemic-related uses withdraw.

### (3) Digital operations

#### 3.1 Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) project

My 2021 report on the Local Full Fibre Network project stated that a business case was expected in July. But the business case proved to be elusive and there was a hiatus awaiting replacement ICT management, which has led to a shared arrangement with Blackpool BC. Work remains, but is underway in robust fashion, on the cost and revenue models and to ensure that the project is legally sound. The detailed business case is now expected to be brought for formal decision-making in July 2022.

**3.2 ICT operations**

In 2020/21 the ICT Service provided superb support to the Council, flexing its services to provide remote and digital working more rapidly than most other public sector organisations. In 2021/22 work to consolidate these new ways of working and strengthen the council's systems and security in the light of a significant increase in cyber-security risks have been a focus. The service secured one of the largest cyber-security grants in local government, enabling significant, additional, systems security work to be undertaken.

A session is being planned to explore a range of options including further collaboration, working with peer organisations, to ensure that the Council maintains resilient services in the face of strong competition for ICT skills.

**(4) Community Wealth Building**

The Morecambe Bay Anchor Collaborative is established and being coordinated by the Clinical Commissioning Group. Network members have signed up to the Anchor Charter, which sets out how members will realise aspirations to reduce environmental impact and increase local procurement, and social value more widely. To give one example of the Council's work, the Green Skills and Construction event on 26<sup>th</sup> April at LMC will be an opportunity for local businesses to learn how to bid for the Council's housing retrofit contracts.

**(5) 'Green' skills development**

The 'developing green skills' group is a subsidiary of the Housing Advisory Group, with the intention of bringing key organisations from across the sector together to increase the skills in the district needed to address the energy efficiency of the district's housing stock. (The increase in domestic fuel prices has further to go and is not predicted to reverse significantly.). The key development of the past year has been the involvement of LMC as it builds capacity to support businesses looking to upskill their workforces to undertake sustainable construction and retrofit opportunities. See the upcoming event at LMC above. It's important to note that 'green' skills is one subset of the skills development support that the council is providing in partnership in order to address local skills shortages – from cyber security to Network Rail staff.

**(6) Sustainable business and innovation support**

Lancaster City Council is represented on the following initiatives: the Electech cluster, the Lancashire Cyber Force, and the Lancaster University – Innovation Catalyst for manufacturing. The strength of the district's innovating, high value-added businesses is reflected in growing numbers of well-paid jobs and many are particularly important in moving towards a more sustainable low-carbon economy. Most are not direct consumer-facing businesses so lack a public profile but it's difficult to overstate their potential for the district's future prosperity.

**(7) Lancaster markets**

The Charter market moved back to city centre pitches in October 2021. This was driven by the decision of the majority of traders who felt that footfall in Dalton Square suffered relative to the city centre, particularly once High St. re-opening started from April 2021. Numbers of stalls have declined, resuming the trend pre-pandemic, and the Council is undertaking a review of the market in the spring.

Assembly Rooms traders resumed in April 2021 and report a resurgence of footfall and spend.



## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Recovery 2021-22**

Anne Marie Harrison's team have done an excellent job of delivering over £65 million of business grants in the district in a timely and sensitive manner. 200 businesses have been supported through a range of new business recovery initiatives and support including International Trade, Women Entrepreneurs, Mentoring, Accounting for Business, Taxi Licensing and Network Railway Training.

The 'Frontierland' site is listed as one of the cabinet's top four priorities for action this year. It was purchased by the council due to the great concern of the lack of investment/development in a very prominent site for over twenty years.

The Council's TV and film location services and promotion have helped show the district in a very good light – Peaky Blinders (Series 6), The Bay (Series 3), Channel 5's 22 kids and counting, Sky 1's League of their Own Road Trip Series, ITV'S The Voice, BBC's Question Time.

'Morecambe Vision' was initiated by myself as a portfolio holder advisory group. This includes a group of stakeholders and business associations interested in the future of Morecambe, including Eden, the BID, Morecambe Town Council, County Council, Bay Tourism, Winter Gardens, Morecambe Football Club, Morecambe and Lancaster College and many more, approximately 16 in total. The group has been working on a co-ordinated vision for Morecambe that provides a foundation for future funding bids.

Supported by LCC the town's Business Improvement District (BID) successfully balloted for another five years, with a projected £625 of levy payers' money being used to attract shoppers and visitors to the town centre through a series of initiatives and improvements.

LCC has supported the Winter Gardens in its successful bid to secure Culture Recovery Funds for restoration work helping to both preserve Morecambe's heritage and contributing to the future regeneration of the town as a whole.

Work has continued in supporting funding applications for the Good Things Collective and their ambitions to take on the former Co-op Building on Regent Road.

Working alongside Morecambe Town Council and Morecambe BID, the City Council has agreed to act as the accountable body for the Morecambe Sparkle Project – a unique illuminations experience for Morecambe which reflects Morecambe's unique features and the beauty of the bay.

Following Covid I'm sure we all look forward to a positive and pro-active year of investment in the district, not least the start of spades in the ground for the Eden project.

**Cllr Tricia Heath**  
**Cabinet member for Economic Recovery**

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services 2021 – 2022**

Thank you to all our officers and councillors for your hard work over the last year to support residents, local businesses and organisations, and councillors.

**Facilities management** has had a particularly challenging time, in addressing the increase in health and safety work that has been needed through the pandemic, and huge shifts in how officers work and where officers work from, as well as supporting huge changes in the use of our buildings.

The **legal services** team supports the good governance of the Council, providing legal and procedural advice to Services in their operational activities, and to officers and members in the decision-making process.

Legal Services have been involved with projects undertaken by officers in all services in the Council and have played key roles in contract drafting and negotiation as well as providing advice on strategy, risk and statutory compliance. Most notably officers have been heavily involved with the Eden North project, the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst work and the incorporation of the Council's first Local Authority Trading Companies.

In supporting other services of the Council, Legal Services have again undertaken successful prosecutions for Anti-Social Behaviour and planning matters. The day-to-day legal work incorporating debt collection, rating cases, recovery of rent arrears, council house sales and other property transactions, including sales and leases, has continued, as has the provision of a local land charges service, and the licensing and information governance functions."

**Democratic services** have worked hard to take all of our meetings online, and then return us to face-to-face meetings, while also trying to meet the demand for ongoing streaming of meetings. This is currently in place for full council meetings and, subject to the installation of new equipment, cabinet will be able to be streamed in 22/23.

While we don't have scheduled elections in May 2022, the team has conducted nine (!) by elections across for both city and parish councils in the last year. Plans are underway for the finalisation and introduction of the measures within the *Elections Bill*, councillors have previously expressed concerns about the detrimental impact of voter ID laws on participation, and our team will work hard to minimise the number of people disenfranchised by these changes.

After a couple of quieter years, the Mayor is attending an increasing number of functions and plans are well underway for the next Mayoral year. As councillors will be aware, we submitted a competition entry for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Competition for a Lord Mayor.

### **Customer (resident) and Advice Services**

As we emerge from the pandemic there have been significant changes in how our resident and advice services have been delivered, and as you would expect with any new system, some lumps and bumps. Our intention has always been to make the service more accessible to residents, so as concerns are raised about call wait times or confusion about when the team will be where, we take time to listen, understand and identify what improvements can be made. I expect to have options for changes in service delivery to discuss with councillors at the April full council meeting.

The resident and advice services team became the heart of our community hub when the pandemic struck and working with the community connectors and other teams have become a

vital part of our community engagement work, taking calls and being out in the community seven days a week. A service particularly appreciated by residents when bad weather hits the district. Other noteworthy additions to the service have included virtual appointments and house calls. Given the size and demography of our district, the willingness of the team to visit a resident in their home or another safe place, when the residents cannot access our services in other ways is much needed.

### **Governance**

As I asked at the Committee System briefing, one question that has consistently troubled me over the last three years - is when does a decision made by councillors through formal means or actions agreed between the leader or a cabinet member in their portfolio area and officers get acted on? When first elected, I assumed the answer was every time. However, experience has taught me this isn't the case, and I think contributed to a culture within the council, where councillors feel they need to keep checking that policy has been followed or actions have been taken. To address this, we need officers to give clear assessments of when the city council does or doesn't have the resources or capacity to undertake new requests or past practices. To ensure officers can give this advice, officers need to be confident that their professional judgement is recognised, not necessarily accepted unquestioning, but never used to suggest that officers are trying to undermine councillors.

The constitution was significantly reviewed in the 2015 - 2019 council term, and so it is timely to reflect on how it has worked and whether it can be improved. Current suggestions include:

- recognising that every councillor has the right to ask questions and speak at cabinet - this was the routine practice at cabinet between 2019 and 2021, but not continued in 2021-2022
- formally establishing a shadow cabinet and automatically inviting them to cabinet and asking the remuneration panel to consider special responsibility allowances for these councillors
- having all committee minutes come to council - this is a practice followed at Lancashire County Council and gives committee chairs a chance to comment briefly on their work and for councillors to ask questions on the committee work
- a more structured briefing and scrutiny process, that would see all councillors (and possibly other stakeholders) briefed and able to ask questions on the work of each directorate and the progress being made against the priorities and strategies of the Core Plan2030, and with the agreement of our scrutiny committees, a follow-up scrutiny meeting to further consider matters arising from the briefing.
- enshrining that chairs and vice-chairs of all scrutiny committees must be councillors whose groups are not part of the administration and if we can work out how to draft it, include independents on those committees

Hopefully, this package could be funded and resourced by a couple of structural changes:

- merging Overview and Scrutiny and Budget and Performance into one larger committee - making it easier for independents and small groups outside the administration to be better briefed on the council's work and plans
- abolishing Business Committee and transferring its work back to the council in the main, with enquiry submissions being cleared by cabinet members in consultation with shadow cabinet members, and reported to the council as part of the leader's report

I'm looking forward to discussion at the committee system working group and the next full council on these and hopefully other ideas. Some measures do not need constitutional change and could

be enacted simply by councillors and officers agreeing that we want it to be done and that we have the resources and capacity to make it so. Where constitutional change is needed, I would hope to progress those just as fast as broad agreement allows.

An area where governance has struggled in the last year is the uncertainty of the Leader's delegations to portfolio holders. This is not a trivial issue, the leader's delegations provide guidance to cabinet members on the lines between their portfolios, guide officers on which cabinet member to speak to on different matters, facilitates accountability, and provides surety to the public and external stakeholders that cabinet members have the responsibilities they claim. The lack of clear delegations has caused uncertainty for cabinet members and officers, as well as damaging relationships between cabinet members. These are issues that haven't needed to linger for approximately five months, as they could have been fixed with one email at any time from the Leader.

### **Flood risk reduction**

No one can promise you that they can stop flooding, but we can take steps to reduce flood risk and strengthen the resilience of our community and services when flooding does strike.

The City Council essentially has three streams of work that it progresses to try to reduce flood risk within the district:

- ***flood risk reduction schemes***, big schemes like Caton Road, but more often smaller schemes that protect a few homes or businesses or a street, cobbling together funding from a multitude of sources and support local communities to take what action they can. The slow progress of these schemes is a source of constant frustration and worry for many residents and business owners as it just doesn't make sense to them that the system allows them to flood again and again, when solutions are known. Fundamentally, this comes down to the Government stepping back from the idea that we work as a community to manage flood risk and increasing putting the onus on individual residents and organisations.
- ***planning*** - the national planning policy framework works against us in terms of flood risk reduction, in that its standard is that no more water should come off a site any faster after development than it did before development, which isn't very useful when there is already a problem. Increasingly, the council is trying to set a standard where developers understand that there is a need to hold and slow water wherever possible and particularly where there are known problems. These principles are part of our climate emergency review of the local plan.
- ***work with developers & landowners*** with the national planning system lagging on flooding, and the tendency of planning inspectors to not support additional local measures we need developers and landowners to understand how important it is to our residents and their purchasers that flood risk reduction work is undertaken wherever possible. A good example of this has been the work between the council as the landowner and Eccleston Homes as the developer, along with the South Lancaster Flood Action Group, the Lune Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency. As the landowner the council said, we won't sell unless you demonstrate that the development will hold and slow water. Eccleston Homes then worked with local experts and agencies to develop a proposal that demonstrated it would hold and slow water. We will need to keep a close eye on this project as it develops to ensure it delivers what we have been promised, and to ensure that other developers understand that this is the standard our district expects.

### **South Lancaster**

South Lancaster remains a complex project with many actors, and coordinating those actors will be crucial to the success of the project, and this appears to be one of the emerging roles for the city council. We want affordable, accessible, sustainable and beautiful new homes to address the

housing need in our district supported by the right social infrastructure, but the county council is building a road it has a contract to build with Homes England and developers and landowners understandably want to see good returns for their investment and land. The difference in size between the county council and the city council does make some of this harder, the county council is used to just doing its own thing and not being particularly focused on community engagement, city councillors and officers are at every turn urging the county council to engage with residents and local groups and to understand that we are trying to develop a community and that every piece of the project must be designed and delivered with that outcome in mind. We are also reaching out to landowners and developers, particularly landowners to engage them in discussions about how their land contributes to the future of the district.

On a more technical note, Cabinet has adopted the JTP Masterplan as a foundation for work to develop the Area Action Plan and engagement with the community and other stakeholders is taking place on a regular basis. At this point the engagement is mostly advising key stakeholders of the process and building an understanding of the issues that need to be considered and addressed. The intention is to have a draft plan for consultation in the autumn of 2022, this document will need to be briefed to councillors and agreed by cabinet.

### **Plan2030**

Plan2030 is intended to recognise the wealth of talent, innovation and expertise in the district, mobilising all of us to work in concert to achieve real change in areas most important to the district. For example, the City Council has a clear plan to reach net carbon zero by 2030, but as we are only a tiny fraction of the carbon emissions in the district if we are to respond robustly to the climate emergency, we need to support those earlier in their carbon journey and learn from those further along their journey than us, so we all make as much progress as we can.

Over the last three years in partnership with other organisations we've facilitated conversations that have included 100s, probably 1000s of people in discussions about the issues most important to them - some have been highly structured, like the People's Jury on the Climate Emergency, some have been more grassroots and open like the community conversations, and some have been conversations lead by other organisations where the council has listened to learn. If you or groups you know what to feed in your conversations then you can do that via a simple webform at [https://keepconnected.lancaster.gov.uk/community-conversations-2/survey\\_tools/feedback-your-conversations](https://keepconnected.lancaster.gov.uk/community-conversations-2/survey_tools/feedback-your-conversations)

Working with other councils and authorities we've also realised that we need places where key stakeholders come together to build shared work, our cabinet advisory groups (as they start again after COVID) are one space for councillors and key stakeholders to have that conversation, but there are other key forums including the Anchor Collaborative led by the local NHS that we also hope to engage in this work.

We hope that Plan2030 will be presented to council early next year, before election season starts. Look out for opportunities to participate in community conversations, cabinet advisory groups, and please do feed in from other meetings you're attending.

**CIlr Dr Erica Lewis**  
**Cabinet Member for Corporate Services**

## Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing 2021-22

This report provides an overview of the work undertaken in Housing since the last portfolio report in 2021.

### Council Housing

Jo Wilkinson as Head of Housing continues to drive performance through Service Improvement Plans and quarterly monitoring of data with key staff. This is clearly evidenced through numerous award wins over the past 12 months<sup>1</sup>. Significant and ambitious programmes of work are being progressed at pace around redevelopment works, whilst the team also provide focus and support to residents through advice and support with energy bills / usage and improving the fabric of the homes we rent to our residents. Customers have remained central to service delivery with the opening of a new Housing Hub on King Street and the team led the way in promoting and taking on young people through the Kickstart employment scheme. This has been delivered with the backdrop of significant challenges including supporting residents following the devastating gas explosion in Heysham, a fire to the rear of properties on Ryelands and continued pressures faced through covid. Of particular note:

- Pilot phase for Mainway Scheme approved, with additional master-planning including the Skerton High School site to be completed.
- Mount Avenue retrofit programme to 19 properties supporting reducing carbon footprint of existing housing
- Provision of first 'A' rated family home and installation of air-source heat pump. Small redevelopments of existing properties have high EPC ratings
- Planning application submitted for redevelopment of Mellishaw Gypsy and Traveller site including resident voice in scheme design
- Embarked on a thorough review of building safety and compliance in preparation for requirements within the forthcoming Building Safety Act
- Focus on tenancy success and making houses 'homes' with introduction of furniture packages for incoming tenants.

### Private Sector Housing

- Reintroduction of the Landlords Forum providing support and advice to landlords around standards and requirements.
- Received funding to help tackle private landlords with the poorest energy performing properties.
- Focus on supporting vulnerable residents through Refugee programmes – significantly through the Afghanistan Refugee Programme in summer 2021, and most recently through assessing properties put forward under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and

---

<sup>1</sup> Winner - APSE Best Service Team: Construction and Building Services – Income Management Team (Sept 2021), Winner - Council of the Year – Northwest Energy Efficiency Awards (Oct 2021), Shortlisted - CIH Northern Awards Team of the Year – Income Management (November 2021), Winner - National Healthy Homes Award Home Improvement Agency Disabled Adaptations Service of the Year award (Dec 2021), Special Commendation - National Energy Efficiency Awards – Council of the Year (Feb 2022)

linking in with private providers arranging dispersal accommodation for asylum seekers.

## **Home Improvement Agency:**

- Delivered £2.1m DFG programme
- Continued provision of hospital discharge scheme
- Provision of energy advice to private sector homes through dedicated Retrofit Technical Officer and delivery of Energy Redress Scheme
- Introduced Charged for Handyperson Services for those willing and able to pay.

## **Homelessness Service:**

- Strong partnership continues with public sector, voluntary / third sector and lived-experience groups through continued engagement within Homeless Advisory Group and Homelessness Forum
- Parish Nurse supporting the health of our most vulnerable residents taken on
- Continued to utilise powers to provide accommodation for all those sleeping rough within the District
- Successfully bid as part of the wider Lancashire partnership to deliver Changing Futures supporting those residents experiencing multiple disadvantage (going live in March 22)
- Working in partnership to further develop the Street Aid Scheme
- Five-bed city centre scheme for homeless residents opened (Jan 22)

## **Strategic Housing:**

- Working alongside Homeless Service colleagues Kathy Beaton helped secure government funding towards the purchase of 12 x city centre apartments to support longer-term move on accommodation for rough sleepers.
- Promotion of green skills and funding amongst contractors with training available from Lancaster and Morecambe College
- Community-led Passivhaus affordable homes built in Halton, supported by council community-led housing funds
- Funding secured through the budget to employ dedicated Development Manager focussing support on development of More Homes for the Bay.

As can be seen above, the teams continue to support the Councils corporate priorities, Sustainable Development Goals, providing additionality through Social Value and contribution towards tackling the climate emergency. All credit must go to staff throughout Housing for the energy, skill and enthusiasm put into creating change under difficult circumstances. Further achievements of the teams can be viewed at: [https://youtu.be/JeUY\\_P\\_InrY](https://youtu.be/JeUY_P_InrY)

**Cllr Cary Matthews**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing 2021-22**

After a very challenging year it was great to see our venues able to open their doors again, with concerts and exhibitions at the Platform and the Storey, the Museums and Salt Ayre Leisure Centre picking up their pre-pandemic plans, the Visitor Information Centres fully operational. Our wellbeing alliances and partnerships have continued to meet regularly and respond to the food poverty and health inequity concerns, faced with the rising cost of living.

### **Events and festivals**

- This year saw the return of many open air events and festivals. The Council invested in a stock of event-based equipment which has often been freely loaned to support over 20 festivals and events during the year, enabling them to be more Covid-secure.
- Attendance and participation at events such as Morecambe and Lancaster Pride, the Health Festival, Highest Point Festival, the Chinese New Year celebrations were high showing how ready we were to move on from Covid worries and lockdowns.
- In August the Lancaster Grand Prix Cycle Race took place, with cyclists leaving Williamson Park and covering nearly 100 miles of challenging hilly countryside. The Council organisation to see them safely out on the roads was tremendous and has ensured that the race will be coming back to Lancaster again this year. This time it will include women competitors.
- In November last year the Council, with partners the Dukes Theatre and Lancaster BID, saw the exciting and successful Light Up Lancaster, with its inventive, humorous and beautiful displays involving 70 artists. With over 55 000 visitors, the economic impact was an estimated £727 000. Light Up Lancaster was a runner up in the Love Lancaster Business Awards Visitor Attraction of the Year.
- The contribution of the Arts community, ably represented by Lancaster Arts Partnership, Morecambe Artist Colony, Lancaster Arts, Litfest, has been so impressive.

### **Our Museums**

- The Museums recently completed a Disability Access project as part of their Equity & Inclusion work, with a full Disability Access Audit of our buildings and digital content for both those with a physical disability and those who are neurodivergent. This work will be supported by a Disability Advisory Group. It was funded largely through a £10,000 grant from Museum Development North West. One of the first actions was to purchase display light fittings to tackle the darkest areas in the museums.
- A £1,500 grant from Museum Development North West is paying for study visits to other museums and cultural organisations to view and share best practice.
- A joint application with Professor Alan Rice was successful for a creative practice PhD to investigate best practice engagement with two differing black histories – for Lancaster the slave and West India trades and for Morecambe the history of black entertainers. The PhD is funded by UCLan and has a value of about £60 000.
- The Museums continue to deliver strongly on their digital service with three successful Facebook pages for the City Museum, the Maritime Museum and the King's Own.
- On behalf of the City Council the Museum Development Manager has formed and is chairing an expert Archaeology Advisory Group to draw up a Research Framework for the Roman fort site at Vicarage Fields and Quay Meadow. The Framework will guide further archaeological investigation on the site to help Lancaster make more of this important heritage and community asset.
- There is joint work with Lancaster Civic Vision to establish a list of notable Lancaster women for the Society's Green Plaque scheme. The first Green Plaque went up in December.
- The History Detective Club, started during lockdown, continues to grow and has over 130 children as members.



### **Salt Ayre Leisure Centre**

The Centre's decarbonisation project is now complete and it is fully functioning on air source heat pumps. New external LED lighting has been installed and glazing throughout the centre has been upgraded to maximise efficiencies.

*Awards 2021-22, August to March*

- SALC reached the finalist stages of the UK Active Awards for Regional club of the year (North)
- The Spa team reached finalist stages for Spa of the Year at The Professional Beauty Awards.
- The Health and Fitness and Spa Teams reached finalist stages at the Bay Business awards.
- The Spa team won Salon of the Year at The English Hair and Beauty awards.

*Performance*

- Income levels in key cost centres such as The Gym, Spa, Café and soft play have returned to those seen pre pandemic in 2019/2020.
- Membership levels for Health and fitness have returned to almost pre pandemic levels.
- Since September 2021 Over 2800 children have attended a Birthday party here
- Since September over 900 people have climbed the walls in Xheight indoor climbing.

*Delivery of new Activities and Programmes*

- New pre-school activities each week such as Baby Ballet, Reading Fairy, Baby Yoga and Baby baller football – a varied programme to encourage more footfall into the Centre.
- More clinics and space for the Community Midwives.
- Soft play sessions for Matilda's mission, who offer baby loss and child loss support meetings.
- Sessions on XHeight indoor climbing for 20 local primary schools.
- Support for the HAF programme, offering children from low income families the opportunity to take part in an exciting physical activity programme during the school holidays.

### **Wellbeing**

- Lancaster District Food Poverty Alliance continued to meet regularly. The CashFirst leaflet was produced, with detailed guidance to residents on ways to cope with on-going poverty or a sudden drop in income. The Alliance has been instrumental in exploring the best way to distribute money from the Household Support Fund to alleviate food poverty in the district, with support for Eggcup, the CAB and enhanced food deliveries to food clubs.
- The Lancaster Health and Wellbeing Partnership facilitated over £200k of funding from the population health investment fund to address health inequalities in the district through community led responses. The Council has been able to aid this work with some community covid support funding. Lancashire and South Cumbria Health Equity Commission is addressing ways to promote health equity in our area.
- Council initiatives to promote good health saw the commissioning with Ludus and More Music of a music and dance project with local primary schools on the history of vaccinations and how to keep safe: *The Alien Needs Our Help*.
- Changing Futures funding was received by the City Council to support individuals with multiple disadvantages, offering intense support to access support networks. This scheme is scheduled to last for 32 months and it is hoped to support over 1000 beneficiaries.
- As part of a bid to the Home Office, the Community Safety Partnership secured £19 000 funding to carry out improvements to the cycle track.
- Following a detailed needs assessment, the CSP identified the priorities for our district as anti-social behaviour, under-age drinking and suicide rates. Subgroups are being

formed to lead on these concerns, which will engage with local schools, in partnership with our Health colleagues and the local Police. A community Alcohol Partnership plan has been drafted. Excellent briefings were delivered by council officers and police on issues such as the spiking of drinks and domestic violence and abuse.

- As the Cabinet member on the Police and Crime Commissioner panel, I attended PCC meetings. In February the panel agreed to a precept of £10.00. One usage of this money will see an increase of 20 police officers to respond to incidents of domestic violence and abuse.

Lancaster City Council can be proud of its contribution to supporting and developing our caring, creative and innovative District. A personal big thank you to Anne Marie Harrison, Head of Economic Development, for her excellent support and challenging guided tours of Lancaster and Morecambe's arts and culture assets.

**Cllr Sandra Thornberry**  
**Cabinet Member for Arts, Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing**

## **Annual Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources 2021-22**

### **Outcomes Based Resourcing**

Setting a balanced budget has become increasingly challenging year on year since 2010, due to reduced funding from Central Government. In order to tackle the predicted future budget deficits, enable the Council to be financially resilient and deliver services that residents and businesses need and rely on, an outcomes based resourcing project has been initiated. This will involve a review of all of our costs, and the development of a balanced budget that delivers the positive outcomes for the district presented in our Core Plan 30. The first phase is using external advisers to help create an outcome focussed framework for investment and expenditure, undertake a benchmarking analysis of our income and expenditure and provide a plan for a programme of transformational strategic work packages.

### **Financial Services**

I should like to thank Paul Thompson and the Financial Services team for all their hard work in helping to maintain a sound financial basis for the Council and in producing a balanced budget for 2022/23. This last year has also seen the continuation of additional financial challenges and grant funding schemes related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The team are still largely working from home and have managed to accomplish the following :

- Successfully achieved all statutory deadlines including closure of the 2020/21 accounts, delivery of the Council's General Fund and HRA 2022/23 revenue budget and capital programmes as well as supporting Treasury Management and Capital Strategies.
- Processed over 16,000 grant transactions to local businesses with a value of over £64M, with the majority of successful applicants receiving their grants within 3 working days
- Provided government returns in allotted timeframes regarding business grants (plus subsequent post payment assurance checking), additional covid expenditure and loss of sales, fees and charges
- Assisted in the Outcomes Based Resourcing project
- Successfully Implemented the Government Debt Respite Scheme Launched on 1st May 2021. A standard breathing space is available to any client with problem debt. It gives them legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days. To date, there have been 94 Lancaster applications to the scheme

### **Revenues and Benefits**

I should like to thank Adrian Robinson and the Revenues and Benefits team for all their hard work in developing and administering Covid grant schemes this year, in addition to their normal activities.

The service has succeeded in:

- Developing and administering a range of Business Grant schemes in line with Government Guidance and handling increasing customer service demands within existing resources.

- Increasing business rate collection rates year on year (2021/22 98.3% in year, 2020/21 97.2% in year)
- Working in partnership with the Business Improvement Districts, collecting £385k on their behalf, to benefit initiatives in the local area.
- Handling increased Housing Benefit take-up within existing performance targets (New claims processed within 22.6 days, change events within 5.4 days) ensuring that vulnerable customers receive assistance in a timely manner.
- Administering Self-Isolation payments to those suffering financial hardship as a result of an instruction to self-isolate
- Developing and administering the Council Tax Energy Rebate schemes in line with Government Guidance

### **Procurement**

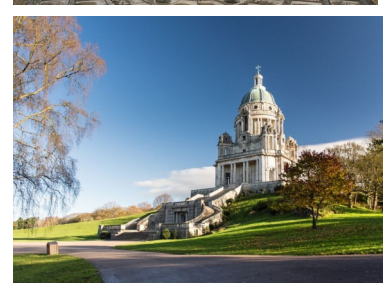
I should like to thank Helen McMahon for all her efforts to enable social value to be incorporated into Council procurements, following approval in 2020 of a local procurement strategy and revisions to the contract procedure rules. This has included:

- Subscription to the Social Value Portal, which has included three officer training events, access to the Social Value Portal for tender submissions and availability of support from the Social Value Portal
- Creation of a page on the Intranet to provide officers with help, guidance, documents and links.
- Spending a significant amount of time creating template documentation and supporting technical officers to include social value in tender documents.

**Cllr Anne Whitehead**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources**

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22





## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has overall responsibility for the performance of all Scrutiny functions (under the Local Government Act 2000) on behalf of the City Council.

## **Budget and Performance Panel**

The Budget and Performance Panel has specific responsibility for providing overview and scrutiny to issues regarding the City Council's performance, budget and financial issues.

# COMMUNITY SAFETY

Each year a Community Safety meeting is arranged.

The Chair welcomed Andrew Snowden, Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Inspector Cara Leadbetter and Sergeant Lindsay Brown to the December 2021 meeting of the Committee.



The Police and Crime Commissioner gave the Committee an overview of his Crime Plan for 2021-2025 which had recently been launched.

He also gave an overview of his activities since being elected to the role of Police and Crime Commissioner. The Committee was advised that a back to basics approach was being undertaken to fight crime in Lancashire.

It was reported that the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan were:-

- Getting tough on anti-social behaviour.
- Disrupting and dismantling organised

crime.

- Tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Cracking down on burglary and robbery.
- Targeting dangerous drivers.

Members of the Committee were advised that the Commissioner's aim was to reinforce neighbourhood task force policing in Lancashire. Initiatives such as an Antisocial Behaviour Problem Solving Unit were being invested in as well as more average speed cameras and an independent review of the Road Safety Partnership was being undertaken.

The Committee asked a number of questions regarding traffic issues, electric scooters, street drinking, groups of youths, problems in back alleys and hate crime.



The Committee thanked Andrew Snowden, Chief Inspector Cara Leadbetter and Sergeant Lindsay Brown for their attendance.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY (Part 2)

For the second half of the Community Safety meeting the Chair welcomed the Leader of the Council, the Director of Communities and the Environment, the Head of Public Protection and the Council's Resilience & Community Safety Officer.

The Committee was provided with an update on the current projects being undertaken in 2021/2022 and future developments for 2022/2023 for the Lancaster District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to ensure that the Lancaster District continued to be a safe place in which to live, work and explore.



It was reported that the CSP had identified antisocial behaviour as its main priority but was currently running a consultation exercise to identify the other priorities for the district. A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) had also been undertaken as part of the ongoing process of identifying the priorities for the CSP from 2022/2023.

The Committee was advised that the key points from the JSNA had identified that there are a wide range of issues experienced across the district with 14.6% of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) being in the top 10% of most deprived areas in England.

The JSNA identified that victims living in postcodes in deprived areas and high rise flats were 4 times more likely to be a victim of reported crime than the normal for Lancaster district.

The JSNA had also highlighted that alcohol is known to contribute to offending behaviour, particularly violence, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. It noted that Lancaster was the eighth worst performing district in the Northwest for under 18's hospital admissions linked to alcohol. To address this the Lancaster CSP had commenced preparatory discussions to establish a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) as well as continuing to work with the Police Licensing Officers/Council Licensing Officers to identify problematic premises that require multi-agency visits.

The Committee was also advised that Cabinet had recently approved the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) covering several areas of the district. This had been a piece of work undertaken with the CSP and its partners.

The Committee went on to discuss the PSPOs and the future work of the Community Safety Partnership.

The Committee thanked the Leader of the Council and Officers for their attendance.



## CLIMATE EMERGENCY REVIEW OF THE LOCAL PLAN FOR LANCASTER DISTRICT - PROGRESS ON A CONSULTATION DRAFT (REGULATION 18)

At the June 2021 meeting the Committee considered a report which detailed the progress made on preparing the Climate Emergency Review of the adopted Local Plan.

The Head of Planning and Place, the Planning, Housing Policy Manager and Senior Planning Officer (Policy) attended the meeting.

The Committee noted that Full Council had adopted the Local Plan on 29th July 2020 which set out how much development was required to meet the local need for homes and jobs in the period to 2031.

The Council had also agreed to immediately review the Plan in line with the Climate Change Emergency that had been declared by the Council in January 2019.

It was reported that over 30 policies had been revisited with 5 main topics emerging:

- Heritage and Climate Change.
- Efficiency in New Housing.
- Blue-Green Infrastructure (the natural environment).
- Sustainable Transport.
- Water Management.

The Committee was advised that Cabinet had agreed to formally commence the review and that the process had begun with remote scoping consultations taking place in Autumn 2020.

The Committee raised a number of questions relating to consultees, the process of producing the Local Plan and the HIF bid and its relevance to the City Council's Local Plan.

Members also went on to discuss the importance of Modal Shift both locally and nationally in relation to private car use and public transport. The use of electric vehicles was also discussed.

The Committee noted that progress had been made on the Climate Emergency Review of the adopted Local Plan and endorsed the intention to seek an imminent approval from Cabinet to commence the Regulation 18 Stage of informal consultation on the draft revised Local Plan.



The Committee thank Officers from Planning for their attendance.

## BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL



Throughout the year the Panel has provided scrutiny on reports, which in turn has provided more clarity on trends and quarterly and annual variance. The following are the main topics considered.

### TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Panel's views were sought on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23. This was an opportunity for the Panel to consider and make comments or recommendations on the Strategy prior to its formal presentation to Council in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

### BUDGET CONSULTATION

In February 2022 the Panel held its annual Stakeholder meeting. A presentation from Councillor Anne Whitehead, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, and Resources was provided on the City Council's Budget and Policy Framework

Proposals for 2022/23. The presentation contained details regarding:

- Council's Core Plan 2030- Strategic Priorities.
- Climate Emergency Outcomes.
- Community Wealth - Building Outcomes.
- Community Engagement, Power and Resilience Outcomes.
- Recent Achievements.
- Budget Proposals – Savings, Income Generation and Additional Resources.
- Council Tax, Spending Power and Budgeted Funding Assumptions.
- Fees and Charges for 2022/23, General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.
- Future Strategy and Outcomes-Based Resourcing.

Councillor Whitehead also responded to questions from members of the Panel, and also a member of the public. Other Cabinet Members and City Council officers in attendance also assisted with responses to queries.

The Panel raised a number

of issues including:

- Income from business rates – Heysham Power Station.
- Public realm – change in responsibility for toilets.
- Building Control.
- Mellishaw Park.
- Outcome Based Resourcing.
- Salt Ayre Leisure Centre.
- Eden North and the Levelling Up Fund.
- Staff pay and inflation.
- Community Engagement/volunteers and a 10 year plan.
- Canal Quarter.

### CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Panel considered the Investment Strategy at its December 2021 meeting, following its presentation to Cabinet earlier in December. The Panel was asked to comment on the proposed strategy and refer any comments to Cabinet to amend the strategy before Cabinet submitting this to Council for consideration.

## DISCUSSIONS WITH CABINET MEMBERS

Each year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee invite Cabinet Members to provide an overview of their portfolio and to answer questions from the Committee.

In February 2022 Councillor Cary Matthews Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing attended the meeting. The Director for Communities and the Environment also attended the meeting.

Councillor Matthew's provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the Housing Portfolio which included:

- Council Housing.
- Homelessness.
- Private sector housing.
- Social Housing.
- Caravan sites.
- Traveller sites.
- Refugee housing.
- Household support & resilience.

The Committee was updated on the Mainway project and was advised that Cabinet had approved the next phase of the regeneration on Mainway including the acquisition of Skerton High School. This included an initial accelerated first phase of the Masterplan proposals.

An update was also provided on the redevelopment of the Mellishaw Caravan Park. The Committee was advised that an architect had been appointed and a planning application would be submitted for consideration in March 2022.

Councillor Matthews also provided an update on homelessness in the area. It was reported that work continued to support the homeless in the district. There are 4 individuals who live on the streets by choice and had decided that they did not want to be rehomed.

The Committee was advised that the Council was providing an extra 5 emergency beds and a further 12 bed scheme was being progressed with Government funding.

The Committee discussed the housing LATCO

that had been established and the advantages and options it created for the Council. Members also discussed rough sleepers and how they could be helped further. A number of questions were also raised relating to homelessness, Mainway, the Retrofit Officer, cladding and empty properties.

In March 2022 Councillor Sandra Thornberry Cabinet Member with responsibility for Arts, Culture and Wellbeing attended the meeting. The Committee was provided with an update of Councillor Thornberry's portfolio which included:

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

Councillor Thornberry advised that an Arts and Culture Strategy was to be developed this year focusing on the Council's priorities and the assets the Council owned in consultation with local people and organisations. The Committee was informed of the ongoing success of Salt Ayre Leisure Centre and that the Spa had been nominated for a national award. The Committee raised a number of questions relating to Well Being, food clubs, the Culture Strategy, museums, joint working with local organisations, the Ashton Hall, twinned towns and accessibility.

Councillor Anne Whitehead, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance and Resources, has regularly attended meetings of the Budget and Performance Panel. A number of Cabinet members also attended the Budget and Performance Panel Stakeholder meeting in February 2022.

Councillor Heath recently provided the Committee with an overview of her portfolio.

Cabinet members are thanked for attended scrutiny meetings.

## **WORKING GROUP & TASK GROUPS**

### **RECYCLING WORKING GROUP**

Since its formation in 2020 the Recycling Working Group has considered a number of topics including current and future development's in waste, the Draft National Waste Strategy and trials working with County Council. They also considered the Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Consultation and waste and recycling reform.

### **TASK GROUPS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed to the formation of three new Task Groups; the Informal Planning Task Group and the Revitalising Key Centres Informal Task Group have both been scoped.

The third task group is recommended to be a formal task group named the Ethical and Sustainable Investment Policy Task Group. A draft scope is scheduled to be considered at the April Committee meeting.

# **HOLDING CABINET TO ACCOUNT AND CALL-IN**

## **HOLDING CABINET MEMBERS TO ACCOUNT**

Overview and Scrutiny Members continue to hold Cabinet Members to account. This takes place through the Call-in process and considering items of business at Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Budget and Performance Panel and also through arranging for Cabinet Members to come to meetings to discuss issues and developments within Cabinet portfolios, as well as through meetings of Pre-Scrutiny Members.

## **CALL-IN**

Call-in is one of a number of ways in which Overview and Scrutiny can hold Cabinet to account.

The choice to 'Call-in' a Cabinet decision is used sparingly at the City Council and with care.

There have been no requests for Call-in this municipal year.



## PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

Pre-Scrutiny is the process mainly based on officers providing briefings on Cabinet reports and the study of the City Council's published 'Key Decisions' contained in the List of Forthcoming Key Decisions. With this information the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can select issues that add value and, if necessary, consider before a decision is taken.

This process can help to add value to decisions at the pre-decision stage, can widen consultation to include Non-Executive Councillors and it can also help to minimise the use of Call-in.

**The Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes the opportunity to submit a response during the consultation phase of a decision and encourages this approach.**

## OUTSIDE BODIES

At the request of Council the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has made the following appointments to outside bodies.

Representatives are asked to report back, if necessary, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of these bodies.

OUTSIDE BODY	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBERSHIP
Homelessness Forum	Mandy King
Lancaster, Morecambe and District Fairtrade Group	Abi Mills

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget and Performance Panel would like to thank the following for their contribution to the Scrutiny process during 2021/22:

- Cabinet Members who have appeared before Overview and Scrutiny bodies;
- Representatives from organisations, which have delivered presentations to the Committee/ Panel this year;
- Officers who have attended meetings and participated in the work of scrutiny.

**COUNCIL****Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22****27 April 2022****Report of the Audit Committee Chairman****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Council of the current position on issues being dealt with by the Audit Committee.

**This report is public.**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 I am pleased to present my Annual Report to Council on the work of the Audit Committee since it was last reported to Council on the 23 June 2021
- 1.2 The Terms of Reference of the committee are set out in Part 3, Section 8 of the Council's Constitution. The scope of its activity is summed up in the statement of purpose:

*The audit committee is a key component of Lancaster City Council's corporate governance. It provides an independent high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.*

*The purpose of an audit committee is to provide those charged with governance, independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of Lancaster City Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place"*

**2.0 Audit Committee Meetings**

- 2.1 The Audit Committee has met 4 times during the financial year 2021/22. A link to the website for further details on the reports and minutes is included here:

[Browse meetings - Audit Committee - Lancaster City Council](#)

- 2.2 In summary, the following areas have been considered by the Committee:

9<sup>th</sup> June 2021

- Review of Internal Audit Effectiveness
- Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21



- Counter Fraud Annual Report 2020/21
- Statement of Accounts Update
- Future Provision of Internal Audit
- HR Assurance Report

21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

- Annual Governance Statement 2020/21
- Update 2019/20 Statement of Accounts
- Internal Audit Resourcing
- HR Assurance Report - Update

24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

- Statement of Accounts Update
- Internal Audit Plan 2021-2022
- Arrangements for the Tendering of External Audit Services 2023/24 – 2027/28

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

- Audit Committee Terms of Reference 2022/23
- Internal Audit Charter
- Internal Audit Strategy and Risk Based Plan 2022/23
- Internal Audit Monitoring
- Review of Money Laundering Policies
- Annual Review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

### **3.0 Key Activities**

- 3.1 The three main documents considered by the Audit Committee annually are the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) , the Statement of Accounts and the report to those charged with governance (ISA 260).
- 3.2 In preparation for the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts, the Councils AGS was reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 prior to signing by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive and formal inclusion in the draft financial statements.
- 3.3 The requirements and timeline for the approval of the Statement of Accounts have changed. In accordance with the amended Regulations. The Councils draft 2020/21 Accounts were published on the Council's website and submitted for audit by 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and the timeline for the conclusion of the audit was 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. These revised deadlines have impacted both Council and the external auditors and both the audits of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 Statement of Accounts are still on-going but are expected to be concluded shortly.
- 3.4 For several years Council has held an agreement with Wyre Borough Council for the provision of the role of Head of Internal Audit (HoIA). Unfortunately, the Council received notification that from 1st April 2021 this agreement would come to an end. Subsequent to this the Council's Principal Auditor has accepted a position at another local authority and as a result, the Council was without an Internal Audit function.
- 3.5 All Councils are required to have an Internal Audit function as it occupies a critical position in any organisation, helping it to achieve its objectives by evaluating the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control arrangements

and playing a key role in promoting good corporate governance. The Council engaged Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) in October 2021 to fulfil this statutory requirement and they presented their Internal Audit Plan 2021-2022 for consideration and approval by Audit Committee.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 The organisation and operation of the Audit Committee is considered as part of the external auditor's annual value for money opinion. Although the audit of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial statements are yet to be concluded, no issues have been brought to the attention of the s151 Officer, or Committee Chair that would suggest an adverse opinion is expected, or deterioration in performance of the Audit Committee.
- 4.2 Issues in relation to the embedding of risk management process and practice within the Council, as identified by partial compliance in the Annual Audit Opinion June 2021, within the Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21 and in the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 are extant. More regular updates of progress to Audit Committee would provide for better oversight of the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management.
- 4.3 I would like to take this opportunity to thank each member of the Audit Committee and also, each and every elected member and council officer who has assisted in providing effective systems of corporate governance and internal control and have continued to make an important contribution to the standing and achievements of the Council.
- 4.4 Over the next 12 months, the Audit Committee will be focusing on addressing the areas identified in the Internal Audit Annual Report. I would particularly like to see increased emphasis and resourcing in respect of embedding Risk Management within Lancaster City Council, as an integral part of strategic and operational management, and to properly inform risk based Internal Audit planning.

**BRIEFING NOTE****MOTION ON NOTICE – MAYORS FOR PEACE****Background**

This Council notes there is a real need for Local Authorities to work together in solidarity to promote more peaceful and safer communities at the local and the global level. There remains over 13,000 nuclear weapons which have the explosive content to create 280,000 explosions of the size that destroyed the city of Hiroshima on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

The Council also notes and welcomes the rapid development of the Mayors for Peace organisation, which campaigns for a more peaceful and nuclear weapons free world. It now has over 8000 member towns and cities from 166 countries representing over a billion people worldwide. 102 of those members are in the UK and Republic of Ireland and include cities like Manchester, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cardiff, Dublin and Belfast.

The main charter of Mayors for Peace calls for “*closer cooperation among towns and cities, strives to raise international public awareness regarding the need to abolish nuclear weapons and contributes to the realisation of genuine and lasting world peace by working to eliminate starvation and poverty, assist refugees fleeing local conflict, support human rights, protect the environment, and solve the other problems that threaten peaceful coexistence within the human family.*”

**Action**

The Council hereby resolves

- To join the Mayors for Peace organisation and consider the approval of a suggested voluntary donation of £120 for larger Councils to assist development of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter and the international campaigning work of Mayors for Peace led by its International Secretariats in Hiroshima and Ypres.
- To consider, along with the Mayor, a permanent representative for the Council to attend up to twice yearly meetings of the UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter.
- To engage with the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace as it develops.
- To consider holding on August 6<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> an annual commemorative peace ceremony to remember all innocent civilians killed in all conflicts over the past 75 years and / or an annual ceremony to commemorate International Peace Day on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**PROPOSER:**

Proposed by Councillor Mandy Bannon

**SECONDER:**

Seconded by Councillors Kevin Frea, Jason Wood and Joyce Pritchard.

**OFFICER BRIEFING NOTE**

Further information about Mayors for Peace may be found on the website <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/>

The site includes a promotional video explaining the organisation's outline, mission and structure. As set out in the motion, MfP supports nuclear disarmament.

The role of Mayor at Lancaster City Council is civic and ceremonial in nature, not decision-making. The Constitution states (Part 1, Summary and Explanation) that the role of the Mayor is "non-political". Clearly MfP has a political view about nuclear arms. Should the Council be minded to support this motion, then future Mayors must be committed to represent the City Council on this body, whatever their own personal political views.

The cost of £120 per annum as a voluntary donation to join Mayors for Peace is minimal and could be met within the existing Mayoral budget.

However, there are couple of things that Council is being asked to consider in the motion which would have more significant costs associated with them. These would include our Mayor and one other permanent representative of the Council, presumably a senior officer of the Council, attending up to two meetings per year outside the district; it is not clear whereabouts in the United Kingdom (or Ireland) those meetings may be held so it is not possible to predict what costs could be incurred and whether overnight stays could be involved. This would have to be met through the Mayor's budget, which will mean that there will be reduced funding available for other events which the Mayor may wish to hold during their year. The peace ceremonies referred to in the final bullet point would also have a cost, which again would be borne by the Mayor's budget. Unless the Mayor's budget is increased, the costs of any such commemorative events would have to be kept very low.

**Staff Resources**

The administrative resources to support this role would be covered by Democratic Support for the Mayoral, Civic and Ceremonial service. This amounts to 18.5 hours per week. The half-time post supports the Mayor, managing their diary, arranging their events and all Civic and Ceremonial functions including Annual Council and Remembrance Day. It is not envisaged that the work involved, even if all aspects were included in the resolution, would create an unmanageable workload. It may, depending on Council's decision regarding bullet point three, require one or two days' of Senior Officer time to attend meetings.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The s151 Officer has been consulted.

**DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has drafted this briefing note in her role as Head of Democratic Services.

**COUNCIL**

## **Community Governance Review 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### **Report of Head of Democratic Services**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to carry out a Community Governance Review to amend the boundary line between the Scotforth East, John O'Gaunt and University and Scotforth Rural Wards and subsequent amendments of the boundary line of Scotforth Parish Council. Also, for Council to determine which body should oversee the process for taking the Community Governance Review forward.

**This report is public.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That Council Business Committee be requested to develop and agree terms of reference, determine consultation plans and agree a timetable for a Community Governance Review.**
- (2) That the Committee be consulted throughout the process and make recommendations on the final proposals to Council.**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 transferred responsibility for the creation and amendment of parish councils from the then Department for Communities and Local Government to principal councils. A Community Governance Review must be undertaken and completed before any changes can be made.
- 1.2 There are provisions in the Act for community governance petitions to be submitted and acted upon, but there is also provision for the principal council to carry out community governance reviews where there is a need to do so.

#### **2.0 Proposal Details**

- 2.1 There are 3 pockets of land where the boundary sits between the University and Scotforth Rural Ward and Scotforth East Ward and also between the University and Scotforth Rural Ward and John O'Gaunt Ward. In both cases the areas of land in question are separated from the majority of the rest of the ward by the M6 motorway.
- 2.2 The issue has been drawn to our attention due to the building of an estate of houses on a former field where the boundary between the Scotforth East and University and Scotforth Rural Wards meet (Appendix A). A small number of homes on the

development currently sit in the University and Scotforth Rural Ward and Scotforth Parish Council but the remainder of the development sits within the unparished Scotforth East Ward. The houses in the University and Scotforth Rural Ward cannot be accessed at any point other than through Scotforth East Ward. The houses that are currently included in Scotforth Parish will be subject to parish precept charges when the rest will not.

- 2.3 Northwards along the M6 there is also another pocket of land that currently sits between the University and Scotforth Rural Ward and John O’Gaunt Ward that is also divided by the M6. There is possible scope for future development of this land so it is prudent to address this issue during the same Community Governance Review.
- 2.4 The plan at Appendix B shows the boundary anomalies and suggested changes to better effect.
- 2.5 The proposal is to alter the boundary to allow the boundary lines between the three wards to sit along the central line of the M6. Should agreement be reached for these changes, approval will be sought from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for an adjustment to the current Scotforth Parish boundary line to make it coterminous with the boundary of the University and Scotforth Rural Ward.
- 2.4 The proposed timetable for the Community Governance Review is as follows:

Report to Council	April 2022
Publication of terms of reference	June 2022
First stage consultation	June 2022
Preparation of draft proposals	July 2022
Publication of draft proposals	August 2022
Second stage of consultation	August 2022
Preparation of final proposals	September 2022
Publication of final proposals	October 2022
Agreement of final proposals by Council and publication of final recommendations	November 2022
Publication of any reorganisation order	December 2022

**3.0 Proposal**

- 3.1 The terms of reference for the review need to be established, agreed and published and it is recommended that a Committee of Council meet to formulate and agree those terms of reference and oversee the process. The most appropriate body would seem to be Council Business Committee. Previous Community Governance reviews have been delegated to that Committee and special meetings were convened as necessary.

**4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 It is clear that the issue with these boundary lines need to be addressed in order to ensure that there is no division within this new community off Bowerham Road and with other possible future communities in John O’Gaunt.

4.2 Members should be involved at all stages of the process before any final recommendations are brought before Council. The most effective way to do this would seem to be to delegate the matter to Council Business Committee.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):**

None.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Chapter 3 of Part 4 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolved the power to take decisions about such matters as the creation and amendment of parishes and their electoral arrangements to local government and local communities in England. Principal councils are required, by Section 100(4) of the 2007 Act, to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when undertaking review and the guidance has been followed in drafting this report to Council.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost of the review will be met within existing budgets.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces**

None.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

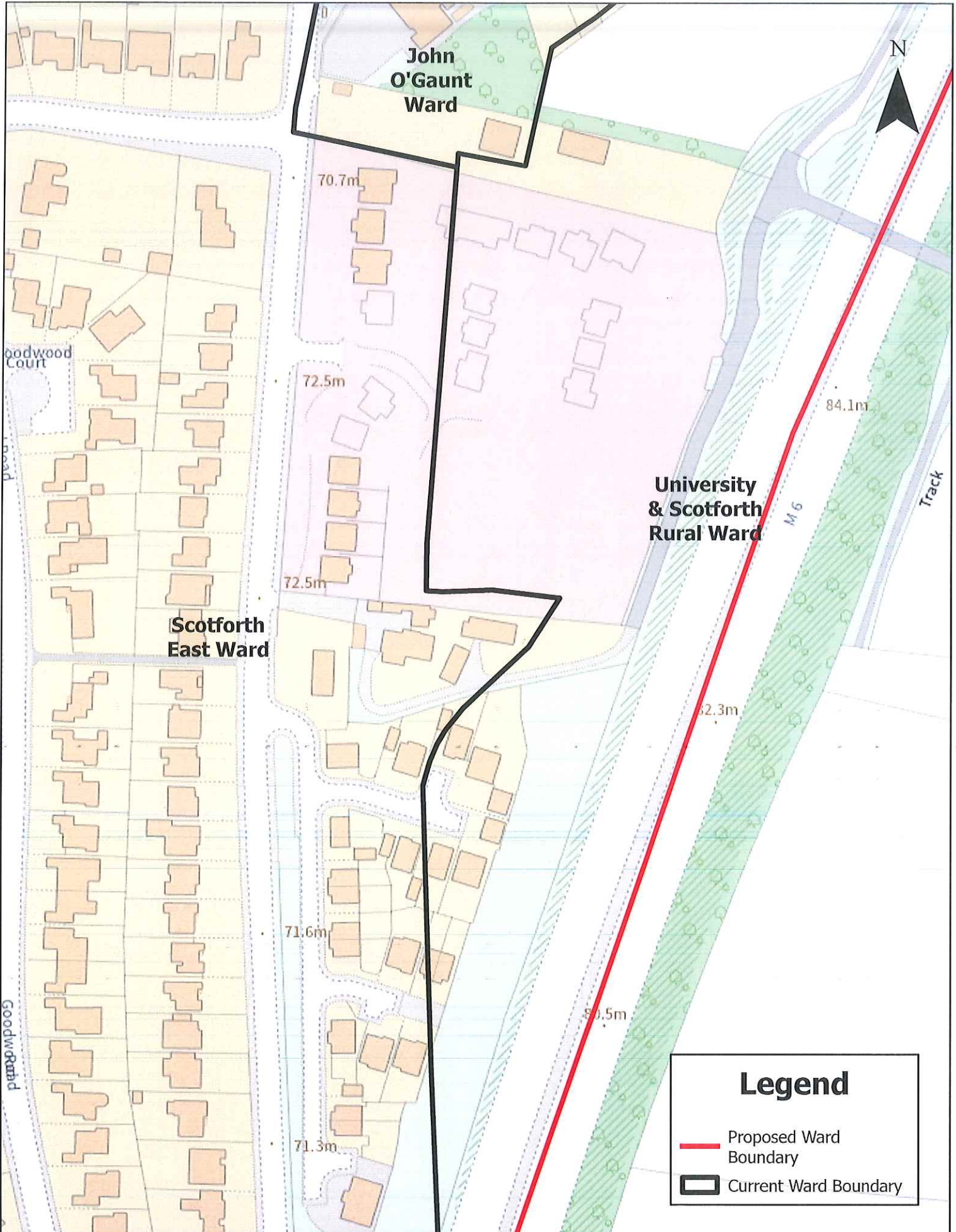
**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

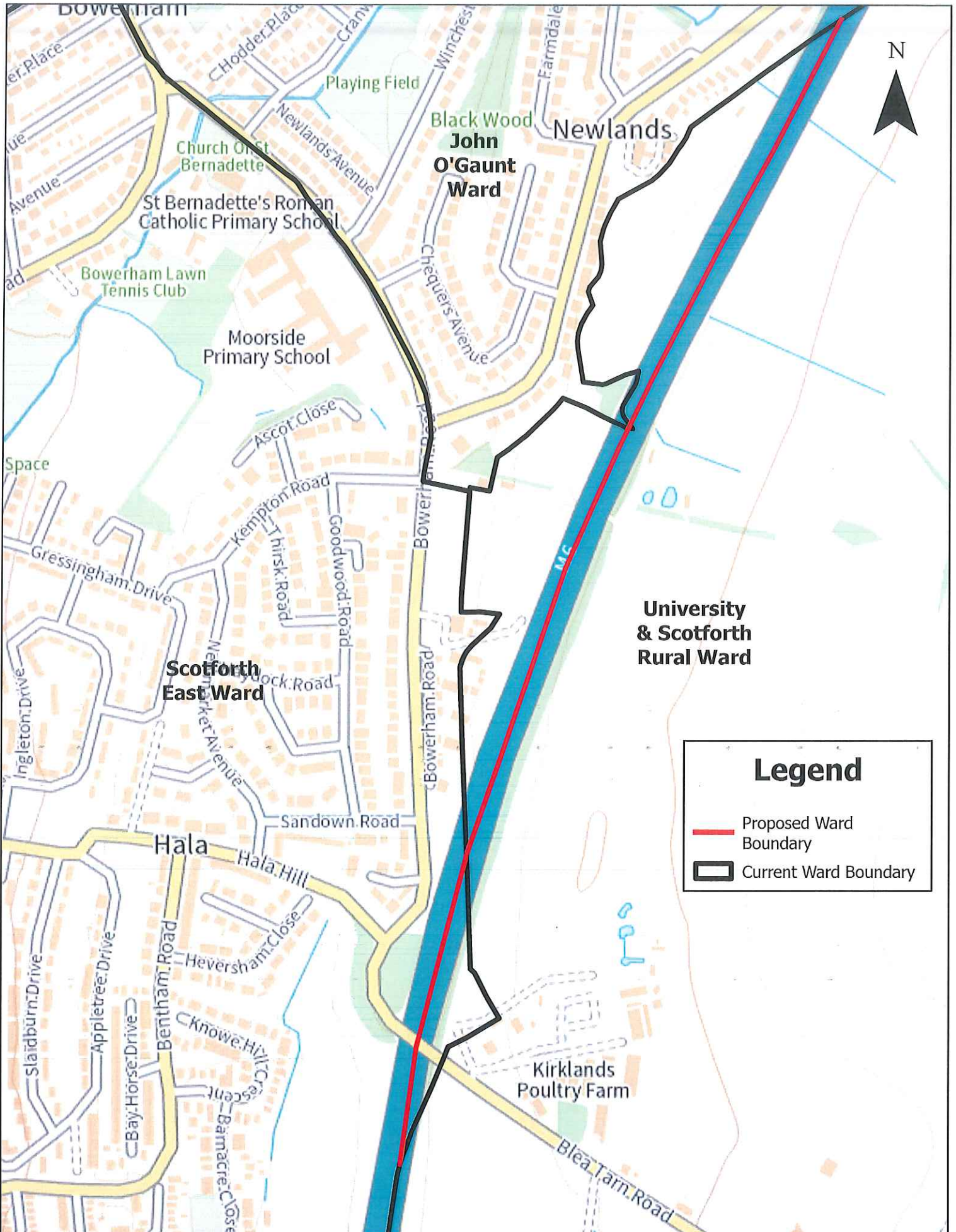
**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Contact Officer:** Lisa Vines  
**Telephone:** 01524 582070  
**Email:** lvines@lancaster.gov.uk  
**Ref:**









## CABINET

6.00 P.M.

1ST MARCH 2022

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Caroline Jackson (Chair), Kevin Frea (Vice-Chair), Dave Brookes, Gina Dowding, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Tricia Heath, Erica Lewis, Cary Matthews, Sandra Thornberry and Anne Whitehead

Officers in attendance:-

Kieran Keane	Chief Executive
Mark Davies	Director for Communities and the Environment
Sarah Davies	Director of Corporate Services
Luke Gorst	Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Paul Thompson	Chief Financial Officer (Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer)
Maurice Brophy	Service Manager - Planning and Housing Strategy (Minute 89)
Fiona Clark	Planning Officer (Policy) (Minute 89)
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

**85 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 February 2022 were approved as a correct record.

**86 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER**

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

**87 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made at this point.

**88 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

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

**89 VIABILITY PROTOCOL SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Dowding)**

Cabinet received a report from the Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration for Members to consider the amendments made to the draft Viability Protocol Supplementary Planning Document (draft SPD) to address representations made during the consultation and seek authorisation for the Service Manager – Planning and Housing Strategy to proceed with formal adoption.

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

**Option 1: Adopt the SPD as a material consideration when determining planning**

---

**applications.**


---

**Advantages:** The SPD will provide guidance to applicants about the Council's approach to viability assessments and information required. It will help applicants ensure they provide appropriate information and set a formal agreement for the payment of costs by the applicant. If the guidance is followed it should help minimise delays arising from viability matters.

**Disadvantages:** No disadvantages.

**Risks:** The SPD may be subject to a judicial review.

---

**Option 2: Do not adopt the SPD as a material consideration when determining planning applications.**

---

**Advantages:** No advantages.

**Disadvantages:** The Council will not have guidance available.

**Risks:** None.

The officer preferred option is Option 1 – adopt the SPD.

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

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

Councillors then voted:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Service Manager – Planning and Housing Strategy to proceed with the statutory process to adopt the Supplementary Planning Document.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The decision is consistent with the Corporate Plan which includes ambitions to improve access to quality housing. The Corporate Priorities (updated January 2021) set out the Council's priorities to reach net zero by 2030; transitioning to low carbon and active transport system; increasing biodiversity and reaching net zero carbon by 2030; supporting new enterprises; securing investment in regeneration; develop housing to ensure people of all incomes are comfortable, warm and able to maintain their independence.

The Lancaster Local Plan includes policies which seek to ensure that the new housing developments include a proportion of affordable housing, provide the necessary infrastructure contributions and support sustainable development, biodiversity, active

travel. The SPD will support the implementation of policies within the Local Plan.

**90 COVID 19 - ADDITIONAL RELIEF FUND (CARF)**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Whitehead)**

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Shared Service that sought approval to implement a Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund to cover a new business rate relief scheme introduced by Government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The fund would be used to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates (such as previous Covid related reliefs). Details of the scheme were set out in Appendix A to the report.

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

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic the Government allocated funds to local Councils to support businesses financially in the form of business grants and also awarded rating relief for certain business types. e.g. extended retail relief. The aim of CARF is to assist those businesses that do not qualify for assistance but have been affected by the pandemic.

**Option 1 – Agree to the proposal as recommended**

The scheme sets out a formal approach to awarding relief and follows government guidance to determine eligibility. The approach adopted seeks to maximise use of funds in an open and equitable way, after the scheme has closed in order to limit the risk of the Council being liable for a large overspend on the fund. The Section 151 Officer, Head of Shared Service will consult with Cabinet Member for Resources to determine a fair and equitable distribution of funds.

**Option 2 – Refuse to access government funds on behalf of affected businesses**

The Council would not access CARF funds and no relief would be awarded. Subsequently local businesses that have not previously received help would need to pay more in business rates.

It is recommended that Option 1 be approved. The scheme enables a formal approach to eligibility, with criteria in line with Council priorities, offering financial support in the form of rate relief to those businesses that have previously been impacted by Covid-19 but received no financial assistance.

Councillor Whitehead proposed, seconded by Councillor Lewis:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That Cabinet approves the use of the proposed COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) as detailed in the report, in line with government guidance and available

funding.

- (2) That Cabinet delegate the final allocation of the funding support to businesses to the S151 Officer and Head of Shared Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.
- (3) That Cabinet authorise the S151 Officer to make final amendments to the policy to accommodate evolving guidance and any technical issues in relation to the scheme and to make all other necessary arrangements for its implementation with immediate effect.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Head of Shared Service  
Chief Finance Officer

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The decision is consistent with Council priorities with the fund:

- supporting existing enterprises at a difficult time in their business journey
- used to benefit local communities
- helping to build a sustainable and just local economy for people and organisation

The proposals as set out are considered a good use of fund to limit the risk of overspend and to achieve the greatest benefit for a range of businesses that have suffered financial hardship during the pandemic.

**91 COVID-19 LANCASTER DISTRICT HARDSHIP FUND (USE OF RESIDUAL FUNDS)**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Whitehead)**

Cabinet received a report from the Head of Shared Service that sought approval to spend residual funds (£347k) from the Council Tax Hardship Fund in line with the recommendations, setting up a new “Lancaster District Hardship Fund” to financially support residents who have found themselves vulnerable and in financial hardship during the pandemic. Details of the scheme were set out in Appendix A to the report.

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

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic the Government allocated funds to local Councils to support residents financially, initially with the primary aim of helping working age residents in receipt of LCTS pay their Council Tax. The Council has distributed funds in excess of Government expectations and is now free to support other projects with residual funds

**Option 1 – Agree to the proposal as recommended**

The scheme sets out a formal approach to distributing residual funds and follows a tried and tested path similar to arrangements put in place by Government in the form of its Household Support Fund this last financial year. The approach adopted seeks to maximise use of funds in an open and equitable way across a number of service areas,

and therefore risks associated with any challenge are considered small and manageable.

### **Option 2 – Suggested amendments to scheme principles**

Any amendments would need to have regard to Council priorities and government guidance, allowing extra time for re-consideration of an amended policy. The Household Support fund comes to an end on 31 March 2022 and it would be good to have a local scheme in place at the earliest opportunity to continue to offer support to those most in need.

### **Option 3 – Do nothing and return residual funds to the Government.**

A blanket policy of returning funds to Government is not an option when residents in the district continue to struggle to pay their bills and finance household necessities.

The pandemic has refocused the Council's attention on the needs of the community and the way those needs, however simple, are serviced. It is recommended that Option 1 be approved. The scheme enables a formal approach to decision making, with criteria in line with Council priorities, offering financial support to those most in need of help.

Councillor Whitehead proposed, seconded by Councillor Lewis:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

#### ***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That the residual balance of £347k from the Covid-19 Council Tax Hardship Reserve Fund be committed to assist residents in the district who have suffered hardship during the COVID-19 Pandemic and continue to struggle financially.
- (2) That the Lancaster District Hardship Fund principles, as set out under Appendix A to the report be approved.
- (3) That the spending be in line with the Lancaster District Hardship Fund, with cost to be met from the Covid-19 Council Tax Hardship Reserve Fund, up to the value of £347k.

#### **Officers responsible for effecting the decision:**

Head of Shared Service  
Chief Finance Officer

#### **Reasons for making the decision:**

The principles of the scheme are in line with Council priorities, with the fund:

- helping to address health and income inequalities, food and fuel poverty, mental health and loneliness.
- focusing on early intervention (as it is proactive rather than reactive.)



- assisting partnership working with residents and local organisations.
- used innovatively to deal with the issues some of our residents are experiencing.
- also providing good value for money through the buying power of the food poverty alliance.

The proposals as set out are considered a good use of remaining funds, to achieve the greatest benefit for those suffering financial hardship.

## 92 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES: Q3 2021/22

### **(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Whitehead)**

Cabinet received a report from the Director of Corporate Services that provided members with an update on performance, projects, and resources during the first three quarters of 2021/22 (April – December 2021).

As the report was primarily for noting no options were provided. Officers responded to several questions in relation to the electric bin wagons, flood recovery grant, employee expenses and council tax collection rates.

#### ***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That the report be noted.

## 93 VCSE ADVISORY GROUP

### **(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to propose that Cabinet form an Advisory Group to consider how the council can play its most effective role, alongside other local partners, in supporting the work of local Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise organisations.

The council's provision of 'core' funding to local Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise organisations was established in 2013. The council is also engaged in various other financial and non-financial relationships, such as joint projects and initiatives, with organisations across the sector. It is recognised that local groups across these sectors contribute significantly to the council's 2030 Priorities around environment, economy, community and services. The report proposed that an Advisory Group be established to take a democratic leadership role and an engaging, deliberative approach to considering how the council and local partners could support the work of local VCSE organisations. Draft Terms of Reference were appended to the report, although the Advisory Group itself would have a role in defining its activities. Membership of the group was at the discretion of the Chair and would be established as part of the group's formation; it was envisaged that membership would include a mix of elected members, officers, VCSE partners and other cross-sector partners.

Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Dowding:-

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

Councillors then voted:-



***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That a Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Advisory Group be established.
- (2) That the Advisory Group be established based on the Terms of Reference proposed at Appendix A to the report, recognising that the Advisory Group itself will have a role in shaping its specific activities.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Chief Executive

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The work of partners across the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise sector contributes substantially to each of the council's 2030 Priorities:

- A Sustainable District
- An Inclusive & Prosperous Local Economy
- Healthy & Happy Communities
- A Co-operative, Kind & Responsible Council

Support for partners makes an indirect contribution to the achievement of each of the Priorities. The Advisory Group will consider the most effective ways to collectively achieve this impact.

**94 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was moved by Councillor Caroline Jackson and seconded by Councillor Matthews:-

"That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act."

Members then voted as follows:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

**95 LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL CORPORATE BRANDING****(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive that sought approval for the newly designed version of the Lancaster City Council logo as part of a wider corporate branding development project and sought approval to develop a brand implementation

programme that would build a consistent identity across the district and council services which incorporate the principles of the new logo design. The item had been deferred from the Cabinet meeting on 18 January 2022 in order that enable officers could hopefully address the concerns that were raised at the time (Cabinet minute 68 refers).

Whilst the report was public the appendices were exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

---

**Option 1: Approve the newly designed version of the Lancaster City Council logo and develop a brand implementation programme**

---

**Advantages:**

- Opportunity to refresh the city council logo and re-establish its brand, reflecting the current community focus and engagement work
  - A logo that is more representative of the district and a brand that recognises the different geographical locations and their characteristics
  - The change addresses key research results from members and senior stakeholder groups
  - Opportunity to realign services to the parent brand and establish brand consistency
  - Raise awareness of the city council and its renewed focus
  - Improve current perceptions of the city council to both staff and external audiences
  - Strengthen partnership working across the district and the subregion
  - Provide an engaged approach that takes account of business needs
  - Potential to drive commercial revenues
  - Opportunity for national and local PR
- 

**Disadvantages:**

None

---

**Risks:**

Brand imagery is subjective and can illicit different responses. For this reason, the brand development work was researched and consulted with key stakeholders and senior staff with a high level of support – therefore mitigating risk.

---

**Option 2: Do not approve the newly designed version of the Lancaster City Council logo nor develop a brand implementation programme**

---

**Advantages:**

None

---

**Disadvantages:**

- Current logo and brand of the city council may remain outdated in the eyes of key stakeholders
- Council and services will remain fragmented and lack brand consistency
- Public perception of the council could remain detached from the progressive and positive changes the council is implementing
- Opportunities to build on the current very high levels of public and business engagement will be undermined
- Limiting commercial opportunities

- Lack of unity or recognition across district

---

**Risks:**

Potential to attract staff could have consequences on service delivery

The Officer preferred option is Option 1, which is to approve the newly designed version of the Lancaster City Council logo and develop a brand implementation programme. This will improve current perceptions of the city council to its multiple stakeholders, while firmly positioning the council as an innovative and forward thinking organisation which is open to change. The programme would involve the brand imagery being designed and adapted to reflect the individual geographical locations and their characteristics within the district.

After much discussion Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Dowding:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

**Resolved:**

***(7 Members (Councillors Brookes, Dowding, Hamilton-Cox, Frea, Heath, Jackson and Matthews) voted in favour, and 3 Members (Councillors Lewis, Thornberry and Whitehead) abstained.)***

- (1) That Cabinet approves the decommissioning of the current Lancaster City Council logo and the implementation of the newly designed logo.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the development of a phased brand implementation programme that will build a consistent brand identity across the district and council services.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Chief Executive

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The council has evolved and changed dramatically, both in terms of the services it delivers and how it engages with its communities. The existing logo does not represent the inclusive, forward-thinking and innovative council that we now are, and so the council wants to refresh its brand image to reflect its new focus and encompass the whole district. As part of brand development work, a change in the current council logo would help transform public perception of the council, allowing it to be seen as friendly and outward focused, while also inspiring staff internally as they recognise the council as an employer of opportunity and innovation.

The proposal is entirely consistent with and supports Lancaster City Council’s policy framework by increasing public awareness of the council and its overall brand characteristics as highlighted in the research.

**96 LAND FORMING PART OF LANCASTER LEISURE PARK, OFF WYRESDALE ROAD, LANCASTER (Pages 12 - 13)**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration with regard to the land currently forming part of Lancaster Leisure Park, off Wyresdale Road, Lancaster. The report was exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the exempt report.

It was proposed by Councillor Hamilton-Cox, seconded by Councillor Lewis and resolved unanimously when put to the vote:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) The resolution is set out in a minute exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The decision is consistent with Council priorities. Exactly how the decisions fits with Council priorities is set out in the exempt minute.

---

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.31 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Liz Bateson, Democratic Services - email [ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk)**

**MINUTES PUBLISHED ON FRIDAY 4 MARCH ,2022.**

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:  
MONDAY 14 MARCH ,2022**