

## PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 21 June 2023, when the following Members were present:-

Roger Dennison (Mayor)

Joanne Ainscough

Mandy Bannon

Matthew Black

Gerry Blaikie

Dave Brookes

Brett Cooper

Gina Dowding

Andrew Gardiner

Alan Greenwell

Tim Hamilton-Cox

Chris Hanna

Paul Hart

Ross Hunter

Peter Jackson

Jack Lenox

Shelagh McGregor

Jean Parr

Catherine Potter

Sarah Punshon

Sam Riches

Paul Stubbins

Sue Tyldesley

Nick Wilkinson

Martin Bottoms (Deputy Mayor)

Catherine Armistead

Louise Belcher

Phillip Black

Phil Bradley

Roger Cleet

Claire Cozler

Tom Fish

Martin Gawith

Erin Hall

John Hanson

Prof Chris Harris

Colin Hartley

Caroline Jackson

Kate Knight

John Livermore

Paul Newton

Margaret Pattison

Joyce Pritchard

Robert Redfern

James Sommerville

Sandra Thornberry

David Whitaker

Jason Wood

**27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Budden, Ruth Colbridge, Paul Gardner, Sally Maddocks, Sophie Maddocks, Sarah McGowan, Abi Mills, Hamish Mills, Susan Penney, Grace Russell, Paul Tynan and John Wild.

**28 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 and 22 May 2023, the Extraordinary meeting held on 26 April 2023 and the Special meeting held on 19 May 2023 were signed by the Mayor as correct records.

**29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**30 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11 (Pages 9 - 12)**

The Mayor advised that three questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11. All the questions related to climate change and plant-based food. The text of each question had been circulated via email to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

The first questioner was unable to attend and had given apologies for the meeting. The Mayor asked the other questioners, Doctor Charlotte Houltram and Mr Pete Bailey to put their questions to the Leader of the Council. The Leader then made his response to the issues raised in the questions and responded to supplementary questions.

Details of the questions and the responses from the Leader are appended to these minutes.

**31 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

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

**32 LEADER'S REPORT**

The Leader presented his report updating Members on various issues. He then responded to questions from Councillors.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**33 EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

The names of Cabinet Members appointed by the Leader, and their portfolio areas, were presented in a report submitted by the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**34 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES AND ELECTRONIC VOTING (Page 13)**

Councillor Wood presented a report of the Monitoring Officer regarding electronic voting at Council meetings.

The report explained that the new livestreaming equipment which had been installed in the Council Chamber at Morecambe Town Hall had the capacity to count and record votes electronically. However, the Constitution would need some amending should Council be minded to take up the electronic voting option. In addition, the report set out a protocol for e-voting for Council to consider for approval.

Councillor Wood responded to questions from Councillors before proposing that the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved. Councillor Brookes seconded the proposition.

After a short debate, the Mayor called for a vote and the proposition was clearly carried when put to the vote.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That Council approves the use of electronic voting for public meetings held in the Council Chamber at Morecambe Town Hall and agrees the draft protocol for the use of e-voting (appended to the minutes).
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

**35 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND BOARDS (INCLUDING LANCASHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL)**

The Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections submitted a report to allow Council to consider its appointments to outside bodies, partnerships and boards.

Councillor Wood proposed, seconded by Councillor Gardiner:

- “(1) That the basis of all appointments remains the same as set out in the appendices to the report.
- (2) That Council makes appointments at this meeting to the outside bodies where the basis of appointment is determined to be by nomination and voting by Council
- (3) That Council notes the bodies in paragraph 4.0 of the report, which have either ceased to exist or have informed the Council that a representative is no longer required.”

The Mayor asked for clarification regarding the basis of appointment to the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel and The Dukes, which had not been determined. Councillor Wood and his seconder agreed that the proposition intended to include both those bodies as appointments to be determined by nomination and voting by Council.

Councillor Brookes then proposed the following amendment, which was accepted by Councillor Wood and Councillor Gardiner as a friendly amendment:

“That the six places on the Board of Trustees of the Lancaster Charities be appointed to in approximate proportionality of two Labour, two Green, one Liberal Democrat and one Conservative. If one of the seats is not filled it is to go to a vote at Council.”

A vote was taken on the proposition which was clearly carried.

The Mayor then went through the list of appointments, seeking nominations for the Arnside and Silverdale AONB first.

Councillor Greenwell was nominated by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Peter Jackson. Councillor Brookes then nominated Councillor Tyldesley, seconded by Councillor Riches. With 14 votes for Councillor Greenwell and 15 votes for Councillor Tyldesley, the Mayor declared Councillor Tyldesley appointed.

For the Board of Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce, Councillor Wood nominated Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Hartley. There being no further nominations, Councillor Potter was appointed.

The following members were appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Lancaster Charity, all nominated by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Brookes. Councillors Brookes, Budden, Cozler, McGregor, Pritchard and Redfern.

For the Forest of Bowland AONB Advisory Committee, Councillor Tynan was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Dowding. Councillor Pritchard was nominated by Councillor Peter Jackson, seconded by Councillor Blaikie. Councillor Colbridge was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Hall. With 14 votes for Councillor Tynan, 7 votes for Councillor Pritchard and 22 votes for Councillor Colbridge, Councillor Pritchard dropped out and a second vote was taken. With 14 votes for Councillor Tynan and 24 votes for Councillor Colbridge, the Mayor declared Councillor Colbridge appointed to the Forest of Bowland AONB Advisory Committee.

For the Furness Line Community Railway Partnership, Councillor Greenwell was nominated by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Blaikie. Councillor Paul Gardner was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Belcher. Councillor Greenwell received 22 votes, Councillor Paul Gardner received 21 votes. Councillor Greenwell was appointed to the Furness Line Community Railway Partnership.

Nominations were taken for the George Fox School Educational Charity. Councillor Hall was the only nomination, put forward by Councillor Wood seconded by Councillor Ainscough. Councillor Hall was appointed to the Charity.

Nine places were available on the Heysham Nuclear Power Station Local Community Liaison Council. Members were nominated as follows: Councillor Wood put forward Councillors Cleet, Hanson, Hartley, Pattison, Potter and Wood, seconded by Councillor Hanna. Councillor Pritchard nominated Councillors Greenwell and Hart, seconded by Councillor Blaikie. Councillor Dowding nominated Councillor Lenox, seconded by Councillor Brookes. The Mayor declared Councillors Cleet, Greenwell, Hanson, Hart, Hartley, Lenox, Pattison, Potter and Wood appointed to the Heysham Nuclear Power Station Local Community Liaison Council.

For the James Bond/Henry Welch Trust, Councillor Thornberry was put forward by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Redfern. There being no further nominations, Councillor Thornberry was appointed to the Trust.

For the Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group (LASRUG), Councillor Hamish Mills, and Councillor Blaikie and Councillor Paul Gardner were nominated; Councillor Hamish Mills by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Fish, Councillor Blaikie by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Hart and Councillor Paul Gardner by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Hartley. 14 votes were cast in favour of Councillor Hamish Mills. Councillor Blaikie received 7 votes and Councillor Paul Gardner received 21 votes. For the second round of voting, Councillor Blaikie dropped out and the result was 14 votes for Councillor Hamish Mills and 21 votes for Councillor Paul Gardner. The Mayor declared Councillor Paul Gardner appointed to LASRUG.

The next outside body appointment was the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership. Councillor McGowan was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Lenox. There being no further nominations, Councillor McGowan was appointed to the Partnership.

One non-cabinet place was available on the Lancaster Community Fund Grants Panel. There were two nominations made. Councillor Pattison was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Ainscough. Councillor Punshon was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Riches. With 22 votes for Councillor Pattison and 14 votes for Councillor Punshon, Councillor Pattison was appointed.

Regarding Lancaster District CVS, Councillor Thornberry was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Redfern. Councillor Stubbins was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Sommerville. Councillor Thornberry received 22 votes, Councillor Stubbins received 15 votes. Councillor Thornberry was duly appointed.

Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Wilkinson, nominated Councillor Punshon for the Lancaster Ripley Church of England Education Trust. There were no further nominations at this point and Councillor Punshon was appointed.

The next appointment was to the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee. This was a non-voting, co-optee place. Councillor Gawith was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Bradley. Councillor Tynan was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Riches. Councillor Gawith received 21 votes, Councillor Tynan received 20 votes. Therefore Councillor Gawith was appointed to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

During the nominations for the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee it was pointed out that the information provided by the Lancaster Ripley Church of England Education Trust had asked for two Councillors rather than one. The Mayor asked for a further nomination and Councillor Cooper nominated himself, seconded by Councillor Brookes. There were no further nominations and Councillor Cooper was appointed.

No nominations were received for the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee, therefore no appointment was made.

Regarding Landscapes for Life, Councillor Peter Jackson, being the only Councillor nominated, was appointed. His proposer was Councillor Pritchard, seconder was Councillor Blaikie.

Three places were available on the North Lancashire Citizens Advice Bureaux Board one each for Morecambe, Lancaster and Rural. Three Councillors were nominated, as follows:

Councillor Ainscough (Morecambe), nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Brookes.

Councillors Sally Maddocks (Rural) and Councillor Stubbins (Lancaster) nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Dowding.

There were no further nominations and all three Councillors were appointed.

For the place on PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee there was only one nomination made; Councillor Riches was nominated by Councillor Fish, seconded by Councillor Brookes. Councillor Riches was appointed.

Councillor Abuhajar was the sole nominee for the Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council. She was nominated by Councillor Lenox, seconded by Councillor Brookes and was duly appointed.

Regarding the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for the North West of England and the Isle of Man, there were three nominations. Councillor Blaikie was nominated by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Greenwell. The Mayor was nominated by Councillor Brookes and he seconded his nomination himself. Councillor Bradley was nominated by Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Cozler. The first round voting produced 7 votes for Councillor Blaikie, 16 votes for the Mayor and 20 votes for Councillor Bradley. Councillor Blaikie dropped out for the second round of voting which resulted in 19 votes for the Mayor and 20 votes for Councillor Bradley. The Mayor declared Councillor Bradley appointed to the Association.

The next appointment to be determined was the Community Rail Partnership. Councillor Blaikie was put forward by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Hart. Councillor Paul Gardner was nominated by Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor Wood. Councillor Blaikie received 22 votes, Councillor Paul Gardner received 20 votes. Councillor Blaikie was duly appointed to the Partnership.

For The Dukes, two Councillors were nominated. Councillor Thornberry was nominated by Councillor Wood seconded by Councillor Hall. Councillor Brookes then nominated Councillor Lenox, seconded by Councillor Riches. Councillor Thornberry received 24 votes, Councillor Lenox received 18 votes. The Mayor declared Councillor Thornberry appointed.

Councillor Wood nominated Councillor Armistead for the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Hanna. There were no further nominations. Councillor Armistead was appointed.

The Mayor then called for nominations for appointments on the basis of Ward Councillors where there was only one appointment available in a multi-Member ward.

For the Crook O Lune Advisory Committee Councillor Pritchard nominated Councillor Peter Jackson, seconded by Councillor Hart. Councillor McGowan was nominated by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Sommerville. There were no further nominations and the Mayor declared Councillor Peter Jackson and Councillor McGowan appointed.

For the Friendship Centre Management Committee, Councillor Brookes nominated himself, seconded by Councillor Stubbins. There being no further nominations, Councillor Brookes was appointed.

Appointments to be made by virtue of a members' position would be referred to the appropriate body for appointment.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the basis of all appointments remain the same as set out in the appendices to the report, save for the six places on the Board of Trustees of the Lancaster Charities; these be appointed to in approximate proportionality of two Labour, two Green, one Liberal Democrat and one Conservative. If one of the seats is not filled it is to go to a vote at Council.
- (2) That the basis of appointment to The Lancashire Police and Crime Panel and The Dukes shall be by nomination and appointment at Council.
- (3) That the following list of appointments to outside bodies be approved:
  - Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB Unit - Councillor Tyldesley
  - Board of the Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce - Councillor Potter
  - Board of Trustees of the Lancaster Charity (6 places) Councillors Brookes, Budden, Cozler, McGregor, Pritchard and Redfern
  - Forest of Bowland AONB Advisory Committee - Councillor Colbridge
  - Furness Line Community Railway Partnership - Councillor Greenwell
  - George Fox School Educational Charity – Councillor Hall
  - Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Gawith
  - Heysham Nuclear Power Station Local Community Liaison Council (9 places) Councillors Cleet, Greenwell, Hanson, Hart, Hartley, Lenox, Pattison, Potter and Wood
  - James Bond/Henry Welch Trust – Councillor Thornberry
  - Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group – Councillor Paul Gardner
  - Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership – Councillor McGowan
  - Lancaster Community Fund Grants Panel (1 place; the other place is a Cabinet appointment) – Councillor Pattison
  - Lancaster District CVS – Councillor Thornberry
  - Lancaster Ripley Church of England Education Trust – Councillors Punshon and Cooper
  - Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Gawith
  - Landscapes for Life – Councillor Peter Jackson
  - North Lancashire Citizens Advice Bureaux Board (3 places, Morecambe, Lancaster and Rural) Councillors Pattison, Stubbins and Sally Maddocks
  - PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee - Councillor Riches
  - Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council – Councillor Abuhajar
  - Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for the N. West of England and the Isle of Man – Councillor Bradley
  - The Community Rail Partnership (formerly Leeds-Morecambe and Settle-Carlisle Railway Development) – Councillor Blaikie
  - The Dukes – Councillor Thornberry
  - Lancashire Police and Crime Panel – Councillor Armistead
  - Crook O Lune Advisory Committee – Councillor Peter Jackson and Councillor McGowan
  - Friendship Centre Management Committee – Councillor Brookes
- (4) That Council notes the bodies in paragraph 4.0 of the report, which have either ceased to exist or have informed the Council that a representative is no longer required.”

**36 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The following changes, made since the last Council meeting, were noted:

The Labour Group had added Councillors Harris and Wood as substitute members of Council Business Committee.

The Green Group had replaced Councillor Russell with Councillor McGregor on the Licensing Committee.

The Liberal Democrat Group had replaced Councillor Peter Jackson with Councillor Hart on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Green Group reported that Councillor Lenox and Councillor Russell would swap places on the Planning Committee. Councillor Lenox would become a member and Councillor Russell would be a substitute member.

**37 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 (Pages 14 - 15)**

The Mayor advised that three questions had been received by the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rules. Two questions were from Councillor Cooper to Councillor Caroline Jackson about the powers of the Council to address anti-social behaviour. One question was from Councillor Fish to Councillor Parr regarding a review of the Local Plan.

Details of the questions and answers together with any supplementary questions and responses are appended to these minutes.

**38 MINUTES OF CABINET**

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2023.

***Resolved:***

That the minutes be noted.

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Mayor

(The meeting finished at 7.40 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,  
please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - email [dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk)**



**QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11****Question from Dr Charlotte Houltram**

*Good evening, my name is Charlotte Houltram, I'm a doctor, and I've worked within the NHS for 15 years as an anaesthetist and intensivist.*

*Almost one year ago, I came here to ask this council to demonstrate its commitment to its climate responsibilities, by ensuring food provided for council events is plant-based. Since then, city councils in Exeter, Oxford, Norwich and Winchester have joined Cambridge ensuring that their own catering is as climate friendly as possible. Despite receiving a positive response to my question last year, I'm not aware that Lancaster City Council has made any progress on this.*

*In the UK, we eat twice the global average of meat. As a doctor, I see the consequences of this every single day with obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol type 2 diabetes, gallstones, diverticulitis, heart attacks strokes and cancers to name just a few related conditions. Chronic disease due to poor diet has become the primary driver of ill health in Britain and I've watched this accelerate exponentially during my relatively brief career. 95% of us don't meet minimum recommended fibre intake for example. We need to eat more plants!*

*There are so many different ways the council could show leadership on dietary change. Ensuring that food and drink provided at council events is plant-based by default basis is a great start, showing that - as community leaders - you're willing to play your part. (Plant-based by default basis means that anyone who strongly prefers to have an option containing meat and dairy can request this in advance (as vegans have to do now). It's a way of flipping the norm, helping to normalise plant-based eating and showing that neither have to be the centrepiece of every meal, while keeping all options available to everyone.) It's an incredibly small ask, which will have a big impact.*

*We know that the public is increasingly aware of the impact of their diets, & more and more people are trying to cut the amount of meat & dairy they consume, but there are many barriers standing in their way. Increasing plant-based options enables people to make healthier, more sustainable choices. I understand there are cafes in Lancaster City Centre for which this council is responsible. I've looked at the menus, which contain some plant-based options, but we can, and must, do more. A truly climate aware council would be continually improving and increasing the number of plant-based options, ensuring they are appealing and nutritious, and are appropriately placed and advertised on the menu.*

*A climate aware council would ensure that eating more plant-based is a central focus of the climate section of its website, and that this is also part of literature distributed to residents. A climate aware council would have billboards around the city encouraging people to eat more plant-based! (as Manchester has done)*

*There are many, many ways that, as a local authority, you can encourage, support and enable people to make healthier, more sustainable food choices ... my question is, what will this council do?*

**Question from Mr Pete Bailey**

*I would introduce myself Pete Bailey, retired nurse, and Lancaster resident. My question is concerning a proposal which has been raised, that Lancaster joins the ranks of other councils in the UK who have committed to encouraging plant based options at council functions.*

*Council will understand that as a society we cannot meet our climate obligations without making huge changes in the way we live. It must also be clear that the impact of some the changes we absolutely must make to ensure any possibility of sustainability will not be politically popular.*

*This is the dilemma you face: To follow through on the 2019 declaration of climate emergency with meaningful but unpopular policies, or shirk your responsibilities for the sake of not rocking the boat. Going plant based, is the single easiest adopted change which can reduce planetary impact dramatically. Producers must be supported to ensure a fair and just transition without major adverse economic impact.*

*The most common objection I'm hearing from councillors when a plant based council declaration is proposed is that people must be allowed freedom choose. A proposal to make council meetings plant based is not, however, about telling people what to do, it's about the council showing responsible leadership and demonstrating practical action on the climate situation - something it has already committed to.*

*We all know how change is often resisted at first. Change around smoking in shared spaces was bitterly resisted, and there too, freedom of choice was often cited. But public attitudes have undergone a 180 degree shift, and that only because some authorities took initiative despite that resistance. The first initiatives were not in fact dictatorial, just bold. Only later, after attitudes had changed and resistance melted, did enforcement via legislation seal the deal.*

*Council could easily lead the way*

*by improving & increasing plant-based options in council-run public venues. Only when caterers make options available can people exercise real choice.*

*Will this council ensure that food and drink provided at council events is the most climate friendly, that is to say plant based? Will council take these steps to support and facilitate residents in making healthier and more sustainable diet choices?*

The Leader replied:

To respond to some of your points:

Health.

Whilst we make careful caveats about highly processed meat substitutes, it is well known that increasing our consumption of plant-based foods is good for our health and well-being. We recognise Dr Houltram's expertise and acknowledge too that chronic illness in relation to poor diet comes with both a human cost, and a financial cost to our strained public health service. It is important to note that whilst the City Council, as a district council, doesn't have a health

remit, we work closely with partners in the County Council, NHS and voluntary sector and will always be glad to promote healthy eating and diet where the opportunity arises.

Climate.

The rearing of cattle in particular has an extraordinary impact on our environment, including deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions and water pollution. Cattle are also extremely resource intensive, with each head of cattle consuming thousands of litres of fresh water and tonnes of feed, which can include grain and other materials suitable to human consumption. As Mr Bailey notes, livestock farmers need to be supported via a just transition into a world where far less meat and dairy are consumed. It is important that we remember the difficulties our farming communities face, the long traditions they honour and the important role that UK farming plays in reducing the carbon impacts from importing food. It is worth remembering too that the practice of importing fruit and veg out of season from across the globe also has a significant carbon footprint.

The Council's catering offer.

As you have noted, we as a council cater for events and operate a small but excellent collection of cafes, such as the Printroom, Williamson's Park and Salt Ayre Leisure Centre. In each case we provide Vegan and plant-based options as part of our core offer. These options are not relegated to special 'asks' to make of our chefs, but are available with 50% of the menu vegetarian and 30% vegan as standard. Ms Brownwood advises us that plant-based is the future and that our society is trending toward ever greater consumption of plant-based food. We welcome that trend, and regularly monitor the uptake of plant-based options to ensure that our commercial operation is viable and effective in catering to the preferences and requirements of our customers. As demand increases the customer should expect that the range of options will expand.

Wider issues

All of those asking questions today have challenged us to consider the important role that food plays in our ambition to tackle climate change.

I would say to you that we are very much alive to that issue, and have been for some time, particularly following on from the recommendations of the Citizen's Jury. I would also note that the climate emergency is one of several crises that our district is facing, and other challenges include food poverty, the use of food banks and the cost of living crisis. We don't have the luxury of meeting only one of these crises at a time, and indeed they are often complex and interconnected issues. As a Council we look for ways that our actions can simultaneously step us toward, for example, tackling climate change, and striving toward food justice.

Our food related efforts to meet the climate emergency therefore include but go beyond considering our in-house catering. For example, our Climate Emergency Local Plan Review includes amendments to existing policies which encourage developers to provide opportunities for local food growing space. We also recognise how important local plant-based food production is to sustainability and affordability, to that end the Council provides funding or partnership support to local organisations such as LESS and the Food Poverty Alliance. On a recent tour of our Council depot at White Lund I saw first-hand how some of the enormous greenhouses which were formerly used as a nursery to grow our bedding plants are now being used by Food Futures sustainable food network. This is now a place where food is grown and training is provided to people to replicate the work elsewhere.

On our Cabinet, Cllr Joanne Ainscough has recently accepted the Environmental Services portfolio. She will be bringing her MSc in Sustainable Food and Natural Resources to bear when she undertakes a review of how the Council's allotments are managed. This will once again feed in to both meeting the climate emergency and promoting food justice through community food projects.

Ultimately what is needed is a firm concept for a 'Sustainable North Lancashire Plate'. An understanding that locally grown, seasonal produce, is the cornerstone of a healthy, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable diet.

Dr Houltram thanked the Leader for his comprehensive reply and asked a supplementary question:

*The theme of your reply is that you are already doing a lot. The implication might be that you are doing enough. So my supplementary question is could you do more?*

The Leader responded:

I think the answer to that has to be yes. And I would hope that what you heard wasn't just that we're doing a lot and that's enough. I hope that what I tried to communicate was that we're doing a lot because we have a lot to do and we continue to push forward and strive to do better. I hope that was the spirit of my communication to you.

*Mr Bailey thanked the Leader for his answers and asked if the text could be forwarded to them both. He offered to assist if any Councillor wished to get in touch with him (via the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections).*

**Protocol on E-Voting in the Council Chamber at Morecambe Town Hall  
Approved by Council 21 June 2023**

1. Each Member will have a desk unit (one unit between two Councillors at Council meetings held in the Chamber at Morecambe Town Hall) and will use their Council issued identity pass to login in and register their attendance at the start of the meeting. Councillors must log out and in again should they need to leave the room for any reason and return.
2. Each unit houses a microphone, an LCD screen and buttons on each side of the screen to allow up to two Councillors sitting either side of the unit to vote for a motion, against a motion, or abstain from voting.
3. To ensure there is a consistent approach for the operation of electronic voting, it is recommended that the following procedure will be followed:
  - a. The Mayor/Chair will confirm that all are clear about the motion to be voted upon and declare when the vote is open.
  - b. The vote will be open for 20 seconds and Members must cast their vote in this time. Members can change their vote while the vote is open. However, their vote cannot be altered once the vote has been closed.
  - c. The Mayor/Chair will announce that the vote is closing and confirm the vote is closed after 20 seconds have passed.
  - d. The outcome of the vote will be displayed on television screens in the Chamber. The clerk will check the number of votes cast does not exceed the number of Members in attendance and then the Mayor/Chair will announce the outcome of the vote.
  - e. The vote will only take effect once the outcome is confirmed by the Mayor/Chair.
4. The Mayor/Chair may decide at any time to discontinue use of the electronic voting system if satisfied that it is not working correctly. If the Mayor/Chair considers that there has been any malfunction of the equipment or any incorrect use of it, s/he may require or allow the vote to be retaken, either electronically or by show of hands.
5. If the vote is tied and the Mayor/Chair needs to make a casting vote, the casting vote shall be made verbally.

**QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12****Questions from Councillor Cooper to Councillor Caroline Jackson**

1. *“Outside of the wider consultation on the proposed licensing regime in the West End, Heysham North and Poulton, what powers do the Council have to address anti-social behaviour committed by tenants of private rented accommodation which is impacting upon other residents in the area?”*
2. *“What assistance can the Council provide to Ward Councillors to help tackle these issues?”*

Councillor Caroline Jackson replied:

The powers that we hold do not cover private rented accommodation we would need to use the powers of the police. In terms of most sorts of anti-social behaviour where we could become involved would be areas such as noise nuisance which would be environmental health.

**Question from Councillor Fish to Councillor Parr**

*“When will the Local Plan review begin, and what is the timescale?”*

Councillor Parr responded:

**Process for Reviewing Local Plans**

Preparing a new local plan is a significant undertaking in terms of both making a public commitment to do so and in committing local authority resources.

Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that local planning authorities must prepare and maintain a “local development scheme” [LDS]. The LDS must state which local plans the authority intends to prepare and the timetable for doing so.

National Planning Practice Guidance requires local planning authorities to keep their LDS up-to-date and to publicise it on their website. Lancaster’s LDS is published on its’ website.

**Lancaster District Local Plan Review Mechanism and Likely Timescales**

The current District Local Plan was adopted in July 2020. It contains a Local Plan Review Mechanism policy. This states that the Council is obliged to review the Local Plan within 5 years of the date of adoption, or earlier if there has been a significant change in circumstances which substantially alter key aspects of the Plan.

Last week’s announcement by Lancashire County Council regarding the Housing Infrastructure Fund and South Lancaster would represent a significant change of circumstances. The announcement means that anticipated infrastructure is unlikely to come forward in the short-term, and that this will affect the future rate of delivery of key strategic sites.

The Local Plan Review Mechanism policy says that such a Local Plan review should be undertaken as soon as possible, and in any event within 2 years from the date of a commitment to a review being made.

Members are advised that local plans are complex and challenging documents to prepare, and experience has shown that Local Plan preparation can take longer than 2.5 years. A guaranteed timescale cannot be provided because some stages of the plan-making process,

including the independent examination by a Planning Inspector, are stages that are beyond the control of the local planning authority.

Should a new plan be commenced, the current Local Plan (which is still in the latter stages of being partially reviewed to better address the challenges of the Climate Emergency), will remain in place until it is replaced by the formal adoption of a new Local Plan. For that reason, the City Council is in a good position regarding its' plan-making activity.

### **Role of Cabinet and Suggested Next Steps**

When significant amendments are proposed to the Council's programme of work which will likely have implications for resources such as preparing a new Local Plan, then the matter is formally considered by Cabinet.

Most recently, in September 2020, on the recommendation of the relevant Portfolio Holder, Cabinet resolved to undertake the Climate Emergency Review of the recently adopted Local Plan, and then again, in October 2020, Cabinet resolved to prepare the Lancaster South Area Action Plan.

It is likely that a report will be prepared for Cabinet by the Chief Officer for Planning and Climate Change to provide Cabinet with the opportunity to formally consider the reasons for the Local Plan to be reviewed and to consider the consequences for resources.

Should Cabinet resolve to review the Local Plan, the LDS would be updated accordingly so that the community and stakeholders would be made aware of the Council's intentions and its new Local Plan timetable.

### **National Considerations – Changes to Local Plan System**

Members are further advised that the government has been consulting on potentially significant changes to Local Plan preparation processes, which creates some doubt about the future process of plan-making.

The Government has indicated that new guidance for plan-making is anticipated to be introduced in "*late 2024*". Local Planning Authorities will be given until 30 June 2025 to submit plans commenced under the existing legal framework and until 31 December 2026 for such plans to be adopted, including all the independent examinations processes.

Authorities that begin a Local Plan before the introduction of the new system but did not then meet the 30 June 2025 submission deadline would need to prepare a plan under the new system. Once the new system is introduced the government has indicated that Councils would be required to start work on a new style plan within 5 years of the adoption of their previous plan and that this new style plan must be adopted within 30 months of being formally commenced.

### **Conclusion**

The circumstances for reviewing the Local Plan as described in the adopted Local Plan Review Mechanism Policy have likely been engaged by last week's news.

However, in the context of the government's stated intentions around changes to plan making, it is advised that Cabinet will need to consider the implications of the timing of commencing a Local Plan Review under the existing national system or alternatively, after the introduction of a revised national local plan-making system.

Councillor Fish asked a supplementary question:

*Is there any indication at this stage whether we would decide on the old system or the new system? Is that totally up in the air at the moment?*

Councillor Parr replied:

I wouldn't say it was up in the air but we will be beginning a local plan review group which will involve updating everyone on the status of the climate change review getting well imbedded into the local plan process. Hopefully, and I make no promises, we will be able to start a formal local plan group. We need to be sure where we are with deadlines and acceptance of the climate change review first. But we will be putting ourselves in a position where we can get going as soon as possible.