



Leader's Report

23 June 2021

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Cabinet

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meetings held on 2 March 2021 ,23 March 2021 and 13 April 2021.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

An item of urgent business was taken by Cabinet at its meeting on 8 June 2021 relating to South Lancaster Growth Catalyst - Housing Infrastructure Fund - Principles Agreement with Lancashire County Council – Delivering Bailrigg Garden Village. The reason for the urgency was that any further delay in approving the decision to enter into the Principles Agreement with Lancashire County Council, would imperil the £140M Housing Infrastructure Funding for South Lancaster Growth Corridor; and also the wider Grant Determination Agreement between Lancashire County Council and Homes England.

Cabinet approved the following recommendations (please note at the time of publication of this report these are subject to call-in).

- (1) *That the key tenets of the Principles Agreement be agreed in advance, working towards the completion of a Partnership Agreement programmed to be signed by 30th August 2021.*
- (2) *That it be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to agree to any minor amendments to the Principle Agreement .*

3.0 Leader's Comments

Bay unitary

Leaders of the three districts have met on three occasions this month, in the first instance for the two new leaders Jonathan Brook of South Lakeland and myself to re affirm commitment to the unitary bid. A press release was issued to reiterate our support. No firm date has been given for the announcement: it is expected within the next six weeks.

Housing Infrastructure Fund/South Lancaster Growth Catalyst

Unfortunately the Principles Agreement signed just before the end of the previous administration was returned by Lancashire county council. Cabinet members and leaders of all groups have spent four weeks becoming familiar with the extensive background material that underlies the agreement. Officer met with Homes England and a negotiated two weeks delay in the signing process has allowed many of the issues to be explored and an acceptable Principles Agreement to be presented to cabinet and passed. This is not legally binding.

The significance of the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst to the future of the district is undoubtedly immense. Over the next five to six weeks I hope all councillors will have opportunity to become familiar with the situation in order for us to decide the best way forward by the end of July.

Mallowdale Road

Work with the residents affected both directly and indirectly by the explosion has continued. A community hub was provided immediately afterwards to give advice particularly on insurance and repairs, council staff also knocked door to door. Staff were praised by other emergency services for the prompt and professional way in which council officers responded. The work of support to residents and police has continued in a quiet and expert way and I was pleased to hear staff and members were offered the opportunity to process their experience with professional help.

Lancashire Police Strategic Assessment

I attended the Police Strategic Safety Assessment meeting for north Lancashire area along with several officers. This looked at the data available to determine the priorities for the next three years. Discussion focused on the effects on health and well-being if communities feel insecure and vulnerable in the face of crime.

Anti social behaviour and the effects of public drug use and dealing were cited: these are themes that a number of ward councillors have drawn to my attention as causing concerns in their areas. Further consultations will be undertaken.

The Community Safety Partnership, which we chair, will be working towards new and concerted action on the chosen priorities in autumn.

Cabinet priorities and Plan 2030

The priorities for this Shared Administration are unchanged from those published as the Corporate Priorities in 2020; action on the climate emergency, wider community engagement and the creation of community wealth. I am asking Cllr Sinclair to become a lead member for Community Engagement to support Cllr Matthews. Unfortunately, the effect of Covid 19 and lockdown has been to render timescales on many projects unrealistic. Portfolio holders are beginning to review their commitments with officers. Cllr Lewis will bring together a renewed Plan 2030 and continue its support and monitoring. I am hoping group leaders of all groups will meet with me regularly so that there will be opportunity for more informal discussion of priorities and progress during the year.

4.0 Decisions

The following Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 23 March 2021:

1. STEP Site Nomination – Expression of Interest (call-in waived)
2. Decision to Award Contract Solar Scheme SALC
3. Local Government Reform Consultation Response
4. Mainway Future Vision

The following Decision was taken by Cabinet on 13 April 2021:

1. Morecambe Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal - Draft Proposal

The following Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 8 June 2021:

1. Referral from Overview & Scrutiny - Morecambe Future High Street Bid Informal Task Group (deferred to July Cabinet)
2. Asset Acquisition Update
3. Palatine Recreation Ground - Building Improvements
4. Urgent Business : South Lancaster Growth Catalyst - Housing Infrastructure Fund - Principles Agreement with Lancashire County Council – Delivering Bailrigg Garden Village

The following Officer Delegated Key Decision have been taken since the last Leader's report. These include decisions taken in municipal years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| ODD6 | Award of contract – Air Source Heat Pumps | Decision to proceed with award of contract authorised by Cabinet on 23 March 2021. |
| ODD1 | Award of contract – electrical upgrades | |
| ODD2 | Award of Glazing contract | |

The following Individual Cabinet Member Key Decisions were taken since the last Leader's report: These include decisions taken in municipal years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

| | | | |
|--------|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| ICMD11 | Gas Contract | Councillor Hamilton-Cox | 23.3.21 Call-in waived |
| ICMD12 | Local Government Reorganisation: Award of Framework Contract for Consultancy Services | Councillor Lewis | 12.4.21 Call-in waived |
| ICMD13 | Whole House Renewal Project – Mount Ave/Hill Road, Lancaster | Councillor Jackson | 12.5.21 |
| ICMD1 | Regulation 7 Direction under Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) | Councillor Dowding | 7.6.21 |

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda 23 March 2021, 13 April 2021 & 8 June 2021