

# COUNCIL

## Leader's Report

26 January 2022

### 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

The minutes of the December Cabinet will be considered at this meeting.

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

No urgent Cabinet decisions have been taken in this period.

##### 3.0 Leader's Comments

This month's report is short for two reasons: the two weeks over the Christmas period during which everyone took a very well-earned break and the appearance of Omicron proving a very transmissible Covid strain has limited events particularly in the run up to Christmas. Special thanks from all of us to Mark and his teams, especially Environmental Health for the work done to protect residents, advance vaccination take up and support businesses.

##### 3.1 Cabinet and the Budget

Cabinet members have been working with Officers since July to ensure that this year's budget, put together in the face of predicted deficit, would maintain services and advance our corporate plan. We have had two further meetings since the December Leader's comments, and I am pleased to say that the budget is now balanced and by the time of

the Full Council will have been presented to cabinet and hopefully referred on to Budget and Performance meeting for consultation with our residents. Ensuring residents are able to comment and ask questions is particularly difficult at present: officers are working hard to ensure they can be heard in the discussion.

### **3.2 County Deal**

This is now a real possibility for the county as a whole. It has been briefed to leaders and via leaders to all members with additional member briefing on 20th January. It is the subject of a motion to council during this meeting. As part of the development of the “new deal” I have attended three District and County leaders’ meeting and an online launch to the Lancashire MPs over the last 5 weeks.

### **3.3 Chief Executive Recruitment and matters relating to staff**

I have attended several meetings with Tile Hill our recruitment consultants. The work required of the group in order to go out to advertise the post is now complete and published. Members will also be glad to hear that we have recruited a new Head of HR and pleased that our interim HR lead will stay in post until the new appointee arrives.

Cllr Wood has commenced work with officers and with a cross party member group to establish a Fair Work Charter for Lancaster city council. Cabinet will receive a briefing on the progress of the Working Well project in the next four weeks.

### **3.4 Wider Community Matters**

#### **3.5 Community Safety**

The Public Space Protection Order to cover Lancaster, Morecambe and other vulnerable areas was voted through cabinet and set in place just before Christmas to support the Police and BIDs in the management of crowds and street drinking in our town centres.

The Police and Crime Commissioner, Andrew Snowden, launched his new strategy in a very well attended meeting in Preston and subsequently attended our Overview and Scrutiny annual Community Safety meeting. Andrew is undoubtedly both ambitious and enthusiastic to attain his aims of reducing anti-social behaviour, disrupting organised crime, reducing burglary and robbery, tackling rape and sexual assault through a special unit.

#### **3.6 Platinum Jubilee**

Plans for the civic events for the Jubilee including the lighting of beacons, are currently being organised, largely by the Priory and the Duchy/Castle but involving, at the moment, our mayor, our officers and town councils in Morecambe and Carnforth. At the beginning of December, we submitted a bid, against eleven other contenders, to gain the distinction of having a Lord Mayor for the district. We are currently awaiting the result.

#### **3.7 Community Meetings and Events**

At the beginning of December, we held a series of community meetings, including Communities Together and the Community Calls. Thought was given as to their functions, frequency and attendance. Subsequent meetings with officers have reviewed and re-

established their value as community engagement but reframed the Community calls as a Community Network. Other events were severely curtailed by Omicron concerns.

The best community event I went to was the introduction to the Tree Warden scheme, held at Father's House in Skerton: attendees received a beautiful book each on identifying trees, a short but informative and inspiring talk from Cllr Brookes and an outline of how they could protect the trees in their neighbourhood. I look forward to the next steps in being involved with the scheme.

Over the last ten weeks I have been involved in a highly professional course of online leadership training through the Local Government Association Leadership Academy. You will be pleased to hear that after six challenging online days and a fair quantity of homework, I gained my pass certificate at the end, in company of a number of other new leaders of all parties. The LGA runs a variety of programmes and days of training throughout the year for councillors at all stages and I do recommend you look at them – quite a few are free and they are often run by both current and past councillors. If you do not get LGA emails you can sign up for them at <https://www.local.gov.uk/>

#### **4.0 Decisions**

The following decisions considered by Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2022:

1. Advancing The Climate Emergency Local Plan Review
2. Corporate Fees & Charges 2022/23
3. Budget & Policy Framework Policy Update
4. Eden North Car Parking - Agreement in Principle
5. Lancaster City Council Corporate Rebranding
6. Land Forming Part of Lancaster Leisure Park, off Wyresdale Road

No Officer Delegated Key Decision has been taken since the last Leader's report.

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

ICMD14	Proposed Designation Of Lancaster Moor Conservation Area	Councillor Gina Dowding 070.1.2022 (Call-in waived)
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#### **Background Papers**

Cabinet agenda 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022