



Leader's Report

28 September 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

1.1 Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meetings held 12 and 26 July. The minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 13 September will be tabled at November's Council meeting.

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

This report covers the holiday period in August and concludes with the sad news of the death of Her Majesty the Queen. We have needed to put some of our routine work to one side as officers have followed the protocols required of civic bodies such as ourselves. I am very grateful to them for the speedy and efficient way that everything was carried out and I know that the Proclamation of the new king in particular took many hours to prepare. I would also like to express my thanks to the Mayor who took on a heavy schedule of duties over the ten days between the Queen's death and the funeral. Lancaster and Morecambe people have come together in various respectful ways from the Proclamation to the vigil and the cinema showings of the funeral.

General matters

- 3.1 Levelling Up Round 2 – Eden bid.** The bid was submitted before closing date on 2nd August. We anticipate a fairly lengthy wait whilst the new Prime Minister takes over. The Eden team remain in contact and we have recently sent a letter commending our bid to the new DLUCH minister.
- 3.2 UK Shared Prosperity Fund.** The report was submitted to 26th July cabinet. We wait in common with every other authority, for the plan to be approved by government. There has been a welcome further award of over £500 000 to be spent on support for rural areas.
- 3.3 OBR Strategy.** Peopletoo was appointed as our consultant for the second phase. We recognised the importance of ensuring that the 2023/4 budget is informed by the initial findings of the consultants. This process has been discussed with cabinet and presented to all members in the course of September.
- 3.4 Morecambe summit.** The request for expressions of interest in developing the site is now scheduled for mid-September and I expect this will have occurred by the time this report is published.
- 3.5 Enforcement.** Following the previous discussions on Enforcement, officers and cabinet members are meeting with a private firm to begin discussions on how a suitable scheme might support our officers in managing minor cases of littering, dog fouling and fly-tipping. This will allow officers to concentrate on cases that may involve significant criminal activity.
- 3.6 Weihai.** The Leader, Chief Executive and representatives of Lancaster University met Weihai city leaders to exchange video material on our two cities and for a discussion on future links with Lancaster. It was agreed that links between students in Lancaster and at Lancaster University's Weihai campus should be strengthened.
- 3.7 Water safety and water quality.** Following the meeting with UU there has been a roadshow at Morecambe Town Hall. Members continue to contact UU about water quality problems. This has become a widespread national issue. A meeting of Morecambe water users attended by officers and a cabinet member, has been held to explore how to reduce risks to swimmers as well as to all who use the bay, foreshore and slipways.
- 3.8 Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers.** Cabinet members and officers have been closely involved in monitoring the well-being of asylum seekers and Ukrainian refugees who are housed in hotels and family homes and houses in Lancaster. Excellent work has been initiated by both county and city officers working alongside numerous charities and churches in both Lancaster and Morecambe. The DWP supported by council officers and a number of agencies have set up a weekly hub to give practical help to Ukrainian families to access work, childcare and English lessons.

New matters

- 3.9** The People's Powerhouse, a feisty and down to earth response to the Northern Powerhouse, visited Morecambe and met with the Chief Executive and Leader in the hope of bringing their annual gathering. This didn't prove possible. However, they liked Morecambe so much that they came back again for another visit on their own and now hope to run a smaller event in 2023.
- 3.10** Members will recall a meeting earlier in the year on the New Hospital's Project. Jerry Hawker the project leader has outlined the current situation and indicated that there would be an announcement by mid-September.
- 3.11** The Cost of Living Crisis facing everyone this autumn was the subject of a paper to cabinet. This resolved officers should work to improve support to all those made vulnerable by the crisis and in particular to work in partnership with others in and beyond the district. Scheduled meetings have seen partners respond with enthusiasm, though everyone is struggling for resources; an action plan will be drawn up.
- 3.12** To end on a positive note: The Salt Ayre Decarbonisation project was the deserved winner of the APSE Best Climate Action or Decarbonisation Initiative award. Both our Chief Executive and Deputy Leader Cllr Frea were speakers at the APSE Conference. Thanks go to all the officers and members who are involved in making us national leaders in this area.

4.0 Decisions

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 13 September 2022:

Delivering Our Priorities: Performance Projects and Resources: Q1 2022-2033.
Cost of Living.
Culture and Heritage Advisory Group.
No.1 Gateway, White Lund Industrial Estate, Morecambe – Roof/Cladding Refurbishment.

The following Officer Delegated Key Decision has been taken since the last Leader's report.

ODD1	Joint parking shared services contract with Lancashire County Council.	Published on 30.08.22
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The following Individual Cabinet Member Decision was taken since the last Leader's report:

ICMD4	Implementation of Mobysoft Rentsense software.	Published on 2.8.22 Taken by Cllr Matthews
ICMD 5	Conversion/Extension of the stables/Garage in the Grounds of 1-5 The Greaves, Lancaster	Published on 7.9.22 Taken by Cllr Matthews

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda of the meetings held on 26 July 2022 and 13 September 2022.