



Leader's Report

25 January 2023

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 meeting held 6 December, 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

3.1 Despite being a short month December was extremely busy this year for cabinet and for officers. The chief focus of work was establishing the figures for the first draft of the budget following the government financial statement given the week before Christmas. This work has continued into the first two weeks of January and the first draft will have been available to everyone as part of the cabinet papers last week.

General matters

3.2 **UKSPF including Rural UKSPF:** Our UKSPF submission was approved by government just before Christmas as were the outcome priorities for Rural

UKSPF. Initial allocations for 22/23 UKSPF are to be announced shortly. The Rural UKSPF has expressed a clear wish to continue as a partnership with a broader remit.

- 3.3 The **OBR Partnership** group, consisting largely of the anchor institutions, has met again in order to confirm and explore shared priorities and projects.
- 3.4 **OBR/Budget:** Cabinet and officer working groups completed the programme of meetings on 23/24 budget including savings to be found or possible receipts from: our services, assets portfolio and the capital programme. The first round of key findings has been reported back, setting up the main options for savings to the 23/24 budget. Well-attended briefings were given by portfolio holder to Budget champions and to all Members. A further online meeting was held for residents including Mentimeter input as well as the results of a Keep Connected survey which gathered 300 responses. The work continues to evolve. A chart of the ongoing work from February 2023 to early 2024 is being drawn up.
- 3.5 **Plan 2050** has made no further official progress since the Launch in London. However further meetings are being held to progress the eight main areas of the plan. As political lead on the Environment group I now attend the countywide Environment and Decarbonisation Strategy Group.
- 3.5 An **SLGC** briefing was planned for early in January to bring members up to speed with the current situation and expected developments. Unfortunately, some details are still being worked through with Lancashire County council – this will hopefully have been resolved by the time this report is published.
- 3.6 **Covid vaccination centres** at the Lancaster Town Hall and the mobile bus at Asda **and** elsewhere have now ceased operation. I visited the last bus session and expressed our thanks to all those NHS staff involved in providing all the walk-up services that vaccinated thousands of local residents over the last ten months.

New matters

- 3.7 **Housing and Regeneration** - Officers and members of cabinet met with Karl Tuplin, director of Homes England, to view and discuss future developments on a number of sites including Frontierland and Canal Quarter. This was very useful and led to pointers on further funding opportunities
- 3.8 **Contingencies concerns** over the ambulance strike in the Christmas period led to a meeting of officers and members with RLI to explore the possible consequences.
- 3.9 **The new Chief Inspector** of local police is now Dave Bannon: we will invite him to discuss the community security concerns for the district as we did with Inspector Britton.
- 3.10 **Community Safety Partnerships** have been given the Serious Violence duty. Writing and reviewing our local strategy will be a considerable piece of work to be completed by December 2023. There is also a welcome new focus by the police

on countering anti-social behaviour, also a priority of the CSP which will review its current provision and way of working on this matter.

3.11 **Eden** - despite a great deal of anticipation the awaited news on Levelling Up, round 2 funding did not occur. All partners continue to wait and hope.

4.0 Decisions

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 17 January 2023:

Fair Work Charter
Corporate Fees & Charges Review 2023/24
Budget & Policy Framework Update
Mainway Regeneration Next Steps
Lancaster Canal Quarter: Progression of Early Phase Regeneration Proposals

The following Officer Delegated Key Decision has been taken since the last Leaders report.

ODD2	Gateway Insurance Fire Reinstatement Works	Published on 20/12/22
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The following Individual Cabinet Member Decisions were taken since the last Leader's report:

ICMD10	Appointment of Strategic Management and Construction Delivery Partner	Published on 14/12/22 Taken by Cllr Matthews
ICMD11	Independent Living Scheme Equipment Upgrade	Published on 8/12/22 Taken by Cllr Matthews
ICMD12	Fire and Building Safety Improvement Works	Published on 9/12/22 Taken by Cllr Matthews
ICMD13	Grant Acceptance	Published on 5/1/23 Taken by Cllr Matthews Call-in Waived.

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda of the meeting held on 17 January 2023.