



## Leader's Report

26 April 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 meetings held 28 February and 14 March 2024, later in this agenda.

##### 2.0 Decisions Required to be Taken Urgently.

2.1 Two decisions have been taken under Rule 15 – Special Urgency, where it was not possible to provide 28 days' notice of the decision being taken. The decisions were taken with the agreement of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny and are being reported in accordance with Rule 16.02 Access to Information Rules:

URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT REWARD MONEY

URGENT DECISION TAKEN AT CABINET: APPROVAL TO BID FOR FUNDING

The reason for urgency in both cases was to adhere to strict deadlines to accept or bid for the funding. Both decisions were exempt from publication and further details are contained in the exempt private Cabinet agenda and minutes (14 March 2023).

### **3.0 Leader's Comments**

- 3.1** This my last report for this administration provides a snapshot of the range of business that occupies the Leader and cabinet every month. There is always more that can be said and this month, at least, members will be able to see from portfolio reports the great amount that has been achieved this year. My thanks are dues to cabinet colleagues for the unending hard work they have put into their portfolios and to officers who have worked so effectively through a period of upheaval. Finally, I must pay tribute to Cllr Anne Whitehead who has been the mainstay of budgets for so long and ended her term very successfully with what has been one of the most difficult of all. We all wish her well and hope she will find new challenges but fewer months of stress in whatever she does next.

### **General matters**

- 3.2 Budget/OBR** In the follow up to the budget the OBR Co-ordinating group has recommenced regular meetings to oversee the progress of the work streams agreed in the cabinet paper. This recognises the need to keep budget related work progressing across the disruption of election and administration change. Reports are expected from the Assets group and Service groups within Full Council week.  
South Lancaster Growth Catalyst
- 3.3** County and city officers are working closely and rapidly on the essential elements required to further the original plans. These will be reported into June Full Council. Unfortunately, County members have been unable to meet city members as yet.

### **Morecambe developments**

- 3.4 The Morecambe Summit** was held last month and was very well attended by residents and agencies. There was wide ranging discussion of future possibilities as well as community concerns expressed about how well we can manage changes to housing, extra holiday footfall and transport requirements. Follow up groups will be organised after the election period. Many thanks are due to the Winter Gardens for hosting and to our officers and their staff for creating a successful afternoon.
- 3.5 Eden.** Officers have been meeting regularly with Eden and governance for the project has now been developed.
- 3.6 Frontierland.** Expressions of Interest have now been sought with a greater focus on leisure use.
- 3.7 Lancashire 2050.** All the subcommittees have now met and considered their programme, including the Environment, which I chair, Transport and Infrastructure on which I am a lead member and Skills and Employment on which Mark Davies is lead Chief Executive. Programmes are currently heavily dependent on Lancashire County Council officers and their ongoing work such as the new Transport Plan. However, Districts and Unitaries are initiating areas on which they wish to work

co-operatively. Lancaster hosted an interesting meeting regarding use of data centre heat for four authorities and this will be followed up.

- 3.8 UKSPF.** The work of assessing bids for the funds available for Yr 2 will be complete by Full Council. It has been very complex due to the nature of government rules, the number of government delays as well as being hugely oversubscribed. Congratulations due to officers (and cabinet members) in getting to grips with the complexities. We hope to see substantial progress over the next two years within the envelope of further reducing carbon emissions, in support for local vulnerable people, for community development including festivals, for developing job skills and supporting business and employment locally and for arts and heritage.

### **New Matters**

- 3.9 The University Exchange 2023.** Held this year at Lancaster Town Hall. The theme: Working Together to Tackle the Climate Emergency drew a large attendance of residents and stakeholders who explored ideas that included both the radical and the highly creative.
- 3.10 Musicians' Co-op.** The Mayor and a number of councillors were very pleased to attend the relaunch of the Musicians' Co-op. The Co-op board have now acquired financing for the asset transfer and to commence refurbishment. Officers and Coop members are working on the details.
- 3.11 Museums, Platform and Winter Gardens.** Meetings have been held with both Robin Ashcroft from the Kings Own Military Museum and representatives of the Friends of the Museum. This allowed us to explore current concerns in more detail and look to working together to gaining funding to improve the current museum offer. Howard Rogerson has met with us regarding the orchestra's use of the Platform and support for its development as a venue. Prof Vanessa Toulmin has outlined to us the considerable developments now underway at the Winter Gardens, the effect more widely on the arts in the district and how arts groups, particularly in Morecambe, can create greater opportunities for Arts Council funding in the area.
- 3.12** Finally, it is sad to record the deaths both of Alderman Kerr, a long-time councillor and of Mike Hallam, a friend to many, who dedicated himself to community and planet which brought him to many meetings, but in particular in Lancaster to supporting ethical trading.

Caroline Jackson - April 2023

#### 4.0 Decisions

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 11 April 2023.

Morecambe Future High Street Bid Informal Task Group
Planning Informal Task Group
Hackney Carriage Fare Review 2023
Lancaster City Council's Strategic Vision for Creativity and Culture

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

ODD3	External Major Void Contract	Published on 03.04.23
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The following Individual Cabinet Member Decisions were taken since the last Leader's report:

ICMD21	Insurance Renewal 2023/24	Published on 15.03.23 Taken by Cllr Whitehead
ICMD22	Mellishaw Park Award of Contract	Published on 16.03.23 Taken by Cllr Matthews
ICMD23	Asbestos Surveying Services – Award of Contract	Published on 05.04.23 Taken by Cllr Matthews

#### Background Papers

Cabinet agenda of the meeting held on 11 April 2023.