



Committee: COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Date: THURSDAY, 23 APRIL 2009

Venue: MORECAMBE TOWN HALL

Time: 5.45 P.M.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes**

Minutes of meeting held on 12th March 2009 (previously circulated).

3. **Items of Urgent Business Authorised by the Chairman**

4. **Declarations of Interest**

5. **Corporate Plan 2009/10** (Pages 1 - 18)

Report of Corporate Director (Finance and Performance).

6. **Supporting Councillors Declaration** (Pages 19 - 26)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services.

7. **Future Ownership of Royal Mail** (Pages 27 - 28)

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

(i) Membership

Councillors Rob Smith (Chairman), Evelyn Archer, Susan Bray, Geoff Knight, Karen Leytham, Joyce Pritchard and Morgwn Trolinger

(ii) Substitute Membership

Councillors June Ashworth, Abbott Bryning, Chris Coates, Jean Dent and Janie Kirkman

(iii) Queries regarding this Agenda

Please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services.

(iv) Changes to Membership, substitutions or apologies

Please contact Members' Secretary, telephone 582170, or alternatively email memberservices@lancaster.gov.uk.

MARK CULLINAN,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
TOWN HALL,
DALTON SQUARE,
LANCASTER LA1 1PJ

Published on Thursday 9th April 2009

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**Corporate Plan 2009/10
23 April 2009****Report of Corporate Director (Finance and Performance)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To present to the Committee a draft 2009/10 Corporate Plan for consideration prior to referral to full Council for signing off.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee consider, and amend if appropriate, the attached version of the 2009/10 Corporate Plan prior to recommending to full Council for approval

1 Introduction

1.1 At its last meeting on 12 March, the Committee considered a progress report in developing the Council's 2009/10 Corporate Plan following a referral from full Council (minute 102 refers). The Committee resolved:

- (1) That the Committee note the extent and scope of the piece of work delegated to them by Council to bring forward a completed draft of the Corporate Plan for 2009/10.
- (2) That the Committee notes the progress made to date and that it is proposed to recommend a final version of the Plan to Council on 18 May.
- (3) That the Committee consider the draft Corporate Plan 2009/10 at its next meeting on 23 April 2009.
- (4) That a briefing on the Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership (LDLSP) for the Council Business Committee members take place before the next meeting.

1.2 Since the last meeting, officers have continued to develop the plan and the latest version is now attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration. In particular, work has been completed in respect of:

- Foreword - which has been signed off by the Leader and Chief Executive
- Vision, Role, Values...
- Key Targets for each Objective
- Key Actions and related projects for each objective
- Corporate Health Indicators

- 1.3 In addition, the Committee is due to meet informally prior to the meeting to receive a presentation on the LDLSP to help members in their deliberations.
- 1.4 Members are now asked to consider the attached **Appendix** and make any amendments prior to referring the Plan to full Council for their approval

2 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

- A That the Committee consider the Corporate Plan, amend as appropriate, and refer to full Council for their approval.
- B That the Committee agree an alternative approach for developing the Corporate Plan.

Any delay in consideration and final approval of the Corporate Plan will have a knock on effect on the preparation of Service Business Plans which in turn may impact upon service delivery

3 Conclusion

The Committee is asked to consider the draft Corporate Plan and suggest any amendments prior to referring to Council for approval.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing) No additional impact arising – any specific issues would be (or have been) considered as part of the relevant aspect of the policy framework or individual budget proposals, etc.	
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS No implications at this stage but this may change subject to review of the draft Corporate Plan.	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add at this stage but this may change subject to review of the draft Corporate Plan.	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS Legal Services have been consulted and have no additional comments.	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has nothing to add.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Roger Muckle Telephone: 01524 582022 E-mail: rmuckle@lancaster.gov.uk Ref: RCM

DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN

2009 – 2012

Foreword

Every area of the country is feeling the effects of the worsening economic downturn brought about by the global 'credit crunch'. The extraordinary events of this financial crisis offer a serious challenge to all local authorities.

The likelihood of a prolonged economic downturn could have serious consequences for our local communities. Jobs are obviously at risk, crime tends to rise in times of recession and economic tensions can endanger community cohesion.

Although we can't solve all these problems on our own we can, by working closely with our major partners, lead the drive to mitigate some of the worst aspects of the economic downturn. Local authorities have a critical role in ensuring community cohesion by keeping people talking, and we have a crucial responsibility in generating economic development by promoting our localities for jobs and tourism.

We also have an important part to play in showing that we, in public service, understand the difficulties individuals and families are facing.

Our responsibility is to provide a wide range of good quality value for money services that meet local needs. We are however facing extraordinary financial pressures arising from falling income from fees and charges (e.g. from planning applications, parking charges and land searches); the falling value of some of our assets; lower returns from investments; the need to minimise council tax increases; and other financial issues such as the higher than expected costs for the council in areas such as concessionary travel and an increase in rent at Lancaster Market. The recession is also having an impact with increased expenditure in maintaining regeneration sites, reducing income and significantly reduced investment interest.

As a result of all of these pressures we must continue to demonstrate how we are driving value for money through our organisation and are making savings. We must show we are on the side of residents by becoming even more efficient, reducing our costs whilst at the same time effectively promoting our area to generate new economic prospects.

This has meant some tough decisions and a reluctant acceptance that the city council simply cannot do everything it might wish to. We fully appreciate that some of the decisions we have taken and will take in the coming months and years will be controversial and will be disappointing to those who have, in the past benefited from affected service areas .

These decision are not taken lightly.

The economic slowdown has left us having to find more than £1 million of savings in each of the next two years to safeguard vital local services and keep council tax

down. We have already made significant efficiency savings, but will increasingly have to do more with less.

Looking forward to 2009/10 we are confident we will be in a strong position to deliver our main priorities efficiently and effectively for the benefit of all our customers.

OUR VISION:

“By promoting city, coast and countryside, we will secure a safe and prosperous community that’s proud of its natural and cultural assets and provides lasting opportunities for all .”

- **In Morecambe** this means a seaside town recognised as vital and vibrant in an exceptional natural setting with a sustainable economy and a stable resident community.
- **In Lancaster** this means being recognised as an important University city with an envied quality of life, strong economic opportunity and rich heritage.
- **In our countryside** this means a sustainable quality of life that protects communities and landscapes while providing the economic opportunity to flourish.

What is our role?

- to provide the leadership needed to help the district address the major issues facing it;
- To bring communities and agencies together to work in partnership to address the major issues affecting the district.
- To provide a range of customer focused services that offer value for money and meet the needs of people who live, work and visit the district.
- To maintain a cohesive community by ensuring we understand the needs of our communities and provide equality of access to our services and employment opportunities

The Council’s Core Values

Our core values state clearly and simply what Lancaster City Council stands for and wants to be known for.

Leading our Communities

We will bring communities together to deal with the major issues facing us and work with our partners to deliver real improvements to quality of life for those in our district.

Putting our customers first

Our customers are at the heart of what we do. We will listen to, respect and value their views, using them to shape our services.

Creating a skilled and professional workforce

We are proud of our skilled and professional employees. We want our people to feel supported, valued and proud to serve our communities and be our ambassadors in the community.

OUR CORPORATE PRIORITIES

1 SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

Increasing economic opportunity is essential in providing the resources we need to enhance our quality of life. We now have an Economic Strategy in place and whilst the current economic climate continues to present severe problems to us all, now more than ever we need to translate that strategy into a viable funded programme of regeneration work in Morecambe, Lancaster, and Carnforth in order to both secure new jobs for the future and attract and keep skilled people in the district. We will work with our neighbouring communities in South Cumbria to create a viable and mutually beneficial Morecambe Bay Regional Park.

Objective 1 Work in partnership to ensure a strategic approach to economic development and regeneration

2 CLEAN AND GREEN PLACES

Residents' satisfaction with street cleanliness, waste collection and our recycling service remains high. We aim to maintain those levels of cleanliness and satisfaction.

Objective 2 Maintain the cleanliness of our streets and public spaces.

We need to care for our environment and safeguard the quality of life of the district. We must ensure that we address issues such as how best to respond to the challenges of climate change and effectively manage our resources, protecting our environment as our district grows and develops in a sustainable way.

Objective 3 Develop local responses to Climate Change.

3 SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Tackling crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are of paramount importance to our communities and are consistently identified as key priorities for the district. Our residents believe that a low level of crime is the most important thing in making our district a good place to live. The Council will continue to play a leading role in the Community Safety Partnership in addressing these issues.

Objective 4 Work in partnership and make our district an even safer place addressing crime and the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour.

Life expectancy between the more affluent and most deprived parts of our district varies by as much as ten years. These health inequalities must be tackled across a wide range of partnerships but there are a number of areas we can influence directly – housing, promoting healthy activities, food protection and accident prevention.

Objective 5 To contribute towards health improvement and reducing health inequalities through both the delivery of our own services and our work with partners.

**CORPORATE PRIORITY:
SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ECONOMY**

Objective 1: Work in partnership to ensure a strategic approach to economic development and regeneration

Key Targets:

NI152 – Working age people claiming out of work benefits.

NI153 – Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods.

NI171 – VAT registration rate (source data ONS) target subject to LAA 09/10 negotiations

NI172 – VAT registered businesses showing growth (source ONS) not within LAA

LOCAL – Tourism spend for last available year (NB. always 12 months lag – therefore hard to react to)

LOCAL – £xxxxxx funding secured to deliver the Economic Regeneration Programme

LOCAL - % of council's actions in the LDLSPs Educations, Skills and Opportunities Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
1.1 Develop and implement with partner organisations a sustainable regeneration programme based upon the LDLSP Economy Thematic Group Economy Action Plan and our own Tourism Strategy.	CD (Regen).	
1.2 Complete Economic Investment Strategy by developing projects around each of the following 5 Vision Themes and apply for funding support for each. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge Economy ▪ Heysham to M6 Employment Corridor ▪ Re-inventing Morecambe ▪ Lancaster City and Riverside ▪ Carnforth Northern Gateway 	CD (Regen)	
1.3 Deliver the council's actions in the LSP's Education, Skills, and Opportunities Thematic Group Action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare Local Employment Skills Plan ▪ Develop Employer Engagement Action Plan ▪ Prepare (workless groups and individuals) Outreach and Engagement Action Plans 	CD (Regen)	

Projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submission of major funding bids for the refurbishment of the Winter Gardens as a nationally significant cultural/events venue by ... (subject to Special Council 29 April 2009) ▪ Proposals for site remediation at Luneside East by September 2009 ▪ Site survey for the wider Luneside area by March 2010 ▪ Morecambe Bay Partnership/ Regional Park ▪ Cultural Heritage Investment Strategy for Lancaster city centre by December 2009 ▪ Initial assessment of the viability of potential employment sites along the Heysham to M6 Employment Corridor ▪ West End Masterplan review June 2009 ▪ Housing Exemplar (Chatsworth Gardens) ▪ Lancaster Science Park 		
<p>Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Local Area Agreement • Local Development Framework • Capital Investment Strategy • Residents Priority</p>		

**CORPORATE PRIORITY:
CLEAN AND GREEN PLACES**

Objective: 2. Maintain the cleanliness of our streets and public spaces

Key Targets:

NI195 – Improved levels of street and environmental cleanliness

2009/10 - litter 9%, detritus 19%, graffiti 2% and flyposting 0%

2010/11 – litter 8%, detritus 16%, graffiti 2% and flyposting 0%

NI196 - Levels of street and environmental cleanliness (fly-tipping, reduced incidents, increased enforcement) – Target to maintain 2008/09 DEFRA rating.

NI192 – Household waste recycled and composted

2009/10 – 36%

2010/11 – 42%

2011/12 – 48%

Local Indicator – Bulky waste recycled/reused

2009/10 - > 50%

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
2.1 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Environment Thematic Group Action plan	CD (Comm)	
2.2 Maintain the cleanliness of our streets and public spaces through a combination of education, enforcement and service delivery.	CD (Comm)	
2.3 Work with other organisations / stakeholders to deliver joint projects - Clean Sweep and Street Pride initiatives	CD (Comm)	
2.4 Implement Lancashire Waste Strategy by :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing food waste recycling in 2010/11 • offering commercial waste recycling • using education and enforcement to increase domestic waste recycling • increasing the amount of cleansing waster recycled 	CD (Comm)	

Projects

Street Pride	Clean Sweep
Bulky Matters	Trade waste recycling
Food waste	Grounds maintenance review

Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Statutory Requirement • Resident Priority • Local Area Agreement • Lancashire Waste Strategy

**CORPORATE PRIORITY:
CLEAN AND GREEN PLACES**

Objective: 3. Develop local responses to Climate Change

Key Targets:

NI185 - Reduction in CO2 emissions from local authority operations

NI186 – Per capita CO2 emissions in the local area (source Defra)

NI188 – Adapting to climate change
Level 1 – 2009/10

NI187 – Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with low energy efficiency ratings
2009/10 - 0.25% improvement for SAP<35 and 1% improvement for SAP>65.

LOCAL – Increase SAP rating of council homes from 70 to 72

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
3.1 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Environment Thematic Group Action Plan	CD (F&P)	
3.2 Implement the Council's In House Climate Strategy	CD (F&P)	
3.3 Promote energy efficiency initiatives for local homeowners (specifically Strategic Housing initiatives)	CD (Regen)	
3.4 Improve the energy efficiency of our public buildings	CD (Regen)	
3.5 Improve the energy efficiency of our council housing stock	CD (Comm)	
3.5 Develop Management Plans for the district's AONB's	CD (Regen)	

Projects

- Campaign on Sustainability, waste and procurement in order to raise staff awareness and change behaviour
- Implement recommendations of Green Fleet Review using EST grants
- Implement the recommendations of the Carbon Trust Energy Audit
- Conduct thermal imaging survey of homes in the district
- Partnership with Energy Savings Trust (one to one support programme) to identify initiatives to improve energy efficiency and responses to climate change
- Council Housing Capital and Planned Maintenance programme.

Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Local Area Agreement

**CORPORATE PRIORITY:
SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

Objective: 4 To contribute towards making our district an even safer place by reducing crime and the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour.

Key Targets:

NI30 – Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders – reported by CDRP at district level

NI110 – Young people’s participation in positive activities

LOCAL - % of council’s actions in the LDLSPs Community Safety Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

LOCAL - % of council’s actions in the LDLSPs Valuing People Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
4.1 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Community Safety Thematic Group Action Plan.	CD (Comm)	
4.2 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Valuing People Thematic Group - Join up with (Wyre's) Hate Crime Initiative (subject to Wyre's bid to the Big Lottery Fund)	CD (F&P)	
4.3 Implement Sports and Arts Project (works with targeted young people to divert them away from crime through free access to sports and arts facilities)	CD (Regen)	

Projects

- Carnforth CCTV 2010/11
- Council housing anti-social behaviour policy review.

Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Statutory Requirement • Local Area Agreement • Community Safety Partnership Plan • Residents Priority

Objective: 5 To contribute towards health improvement and reduce health inequalities through both the delivery of our own services and our work with partners.

Key Targets:

NI8 – Adult participation in sport (collected by Sport England Active People Survey)

NI173 – Flows on to incapacity benefit from employment (source DWP)

LOCAL - % of council's actions in the LDLSPs Health and Well Being Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

LOCAL - Sum of Nitrogen Dioxide air pollutant concentrations in excess of the annual mean air quality objective..

LOCAL - Increase the number of visits to leisure facilities ?
CDT measure?

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
5.1 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Health and Well Being Thematic Group Action Plan.	CD (Comm)	
5.2 Maintain children and young people participation in sports and physical activities.	CD (F&P)	
5.3 Implement Cycling Demonstration Town programme	CD (Comm)	
5.4 4 Prepare effective air quality solutions through implementation of the LSP Environment thematic group Stage 2 action plans for air quality.	CD (Comm)	
5.5 Implement Sports and Physical Activities Alliance (SPAA) projects	CD (Regen)	

Projects

- District Playground Improvements
- Big Lottery Parks
- Poulton Pedestrian Route
- Cycle Demonstration Town Projects
- New air quality action plan for Lancaster; initial air quality action plan for Carnforth; Local Air Quality Forum

Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Statutory Requirement • Local Area Agreement • Residents Priority

Objective: 6 To improve the standard, availability and affordability of housing in the district to meet local needs

Key Targets: •

NI155 – Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

NI156 – Number of households living in temporary accommodation

NI185 - % of decent council homes

NI159 – Supply of ready to develop housing sites

NI160 – Local authority tenants satisfaction with landlord services

NI170 – Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years

LOCAL - % of council's actions in the LDLSPs Health and Well Being Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

LOCAL - Achieve homelessness strategy target of 12 by March 2010

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
7.1 Deliver the council's actions in the LDLSP's Health & Well Being Thematic Group action plan - Provide affordable housing in accordance with the Housing Strategy and Local Development Framework.	CD (Comm)	
7.2 Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation	CD (Comm)	
7.3 Refresh Housing Strategy 2009-2012	CD (Comm)	
7.4 Implement Homeless Strategy Action Plan - Reduce the levels of homelessness within the district	CD (Comm)	
7.5 Deliver 2009/10 council housing Capital programme.	CD (Comm)	
Projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YMCA Places of Change, • Poulton Renewal • Regional Housing Board Funding Scheme • Disabled Facilities Grants • Council housing Asset Management Plan 		
<p>Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Statutory Requirement • • Local Area Agreement • Housing Strategy • Residents Priority</p>		

CORPORATE PRIORITY: SUPPORT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Objective: 7 To work in partnership with others meet the differing needs of communities within our district

Key Targets: •

NI1 – % of people from different backgrounds getting on well together (Place Survey)

NI4 - % of people who feel that can influence decisions in their locality (Place Survey)

NI6 – Participation in regular volunteering (Place Survey)

NI7 – Environment for a thriving 3rd sector (source office for the third sector – 3 year target to be confirmed)

LOCAL - % of council's actions in the LDLSPs Valuing People Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

LOCAL - % of council's actions in the LDLSPs Children and Young People's Thematic Group Action Plan achieved

Key Actions:	Action by:	
	Lead Offr	Lead Cab Mem
6.1 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Valuing People Thematic Group Action Plan – develop and implement a Community Cohesion Strategy	C.Ex.	
6.2 Support the LDLSP's development of a Community Engagement Framework for the district where this is a priority for the Council	Cd (F&P)	
6.3 Deliver the Council's actions in the LDLSP's Children & Young People Thematic Group Action Plan – Implement Lancaster City Council's own C&YP action plan and maintain the range of opportunities for children and young people to take part in positive activities	CD (F&P)	
6.4 Continue to work with Lancashire County Council and the district's parish and town councils to ensure the three tiers of local government work more effectively (includes development of a district Parish Charter)	CD (F&P)	

Projects

- Centenary Celebrations
- Morecambe Town Council
- Parish service provision & funding
- Tenant Participation Compact

Rationale • Sustainable Community Strategy • Local Area Agreement • Residents Priority

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

Key Corporate Indicators:

These are the key targets which will measure the progress as a whole the Council has made towards achieving its overall aim to maintain a well managed, cost-effective Council responsive to the needs and aspirations of local people.

SELECT FROM

- *Keep the City Council element of Council Tax increases to acceptable levels being 4% or less in 2009/10 and in 2010-11 and 2011/12.*
 - *NI179 – Value for money – total net value of ongoing cash releasing value for money gains (Efficiency/ MTFS targets)*
 - *% of property marketed to achieve asset sales to generate agreed capital receipts*
 - *% of services where initial access via Customer Service Centres can be either face to face, telephone or web – 40% 2009/10*
 - *NI14 – Avoidable contact – reduce from 52% (2008/09)to 40% (2009/10)*
 - *% of residents rate their local area as a very good or fairly good place to live – baseline and target to be established from Place survey*
 - *% of residents agree that that the City Council provides value for money (Place Survey)*
 - *Reduce the number of days lost to sickness absence from 9.98 (07/08) to 9.50 in 09/10*
 - *Level of Equality Standard for Local Government*
 - *Use of Resources judgements*
 - *Maintain level 1of the Member Development Charter*
 - *Income collection*
 - *% of in year Council Tax collected*
 - *% of NNDR collected*
- NI 180 Changes to Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit entitlements within the year*
- NI 181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events.*

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

**Supporting Councillors Declaration
23rd April 2009**

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT
To advise Members of a request from the I&DeA to sign up to their Supporting Councillors Declaration.
This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider whether this Council should sign up to the I&DeA Supporting Councillors Declaration.

1.0 Report

- 1.1 The I&DeA has recognised the responsibility of Councils to give Councillors the tools they need to do their job as leaders of the community, encouraging and supporting local initiatives and through this make local democracy more relevant and accessible to people. The White Paper 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power' (July 2008) places considerable emphasis on the importance of the role of councillors as community leaders and the need to properly support them in this important public service.
- 1.2 It is the view of the I&DeA therefore that Councils that properly support their councillor will find that they can get:
 - A better understanding of the needs of their local communities
 - Greater public involvement in local initiatives
 - Greater interest in the role of the council
- 1.3 As the empowerment agenda rolls out the role of the councillor will become more important and the demands placed on them will increase. Their effectiveness will depend upon the quality of the support they receive.
- 1.4 The I&DeA is therefore inviting and encouraging all Councils to commit to the 10 statements included in the Declaration which set out the standards of support for councillors which they will undertake to provide. It is suggested that this be used in conjunction with their Supporting Councillors Framework to review existing support functions.
- 1.5 It is accepted that the need for effective member training and development has now been generally recognised, the issue of member support has not been addressed so

systematically and yet the effectiveness of councillors depends upon the quality of such support.

- 1.6 The I&DeA has therefore launched the declaration and framework for councils to sign up to and pledge their commitment to giving councillors the support they need, whether as leading member or in a frontline, representative, or scrutiny role. The declaration is as follows:

That this Council undertakes to:

- 1 Assist existing and prospective Councillors so they are aware of what is expected of them.
- 2 Provide all Councillors with administrative support to meet their individual needs, including the provision of adequate support staff to meeting Councillors; scrutiny, information and research needs.
- 3 Ensure that all Councillors are kept advised on how decisions are made and the opportunities open to them to influence these decisions.
- 4 Be aware of how much information we send to Councillors.
- 5 Provide space for Councillors to hold ward surgeries, meetings with constituents and to discuss Council business.
- 6 Identify the “democracy” budget; current expenditure that funds Councillor support and development, supports scrutiny research and consultation, etc. Consider delegated budgets for improvements within the ward.
- 7 Ensure that all support is appropriate for individual Councillors and that there is clarity of what support and development opportunities are available.
- 8 Ensure all Councillors have stationery and office equipment available to them both at home and when on council premises, to provide access to appropriate ICT and help Councillors to use such technology to improve efficiency and communication.
- 9 Conduct interviews with Councillors who are standing down/retiring/resigning.
- 10 Identify the personal development needs of Councillors, provide a member development programme.

- 1.7 Members will recall that last year the LGIU launched a Supporting Councillors Manifesto which set out a dozen similar measures which it felt could better support existing and future councillors. In considering this the Committee agreed that whilst the Council was supportive of most of the general principles contained within the Manifesto, it was not in a position to commit further resources to any of the proposals. It was agreed however that the Head of Democratic Services should keep the matter under review and report back to the Committee on the action points listed to enable consideration to be given to reviewing the delivery of support to Members in order to strengthen local democracy in the future.

- 1.8 Set out at Appendix A is the current position in relation to both the action points contained within the LGIU Manifesto and the actions listed in the I&DeA declaration.

2.0 Options

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference of the Council Business Committee provide for this committee to determine the method of response and where necessary ratify responses on behalf of full Council to consultations.

2.2 Whilst a process is in place to deal with government and other consultation exercises in an efficient manner, these more ‘ad hoc’ issues are best considered on an individual basis.

2.3 The Committee is therefore requested to consider:

Option 1 – to support and sign up to the I&DeA Declaration on the basis that existing Member support meets the requirements of the declaration.

Option 2 – to take no action regarding the request to sign up to the I&DeA Declaration.

Option 3 – to refer the matter to full Council for a full debate by all Members.

2.4 In addition Members may wish to review the actions contained within both the LGIU Manifesto and the I&DeA Declaration as set out in Appendix A and identify any elements which should be further progressed by the Head of Democratic Services.

3.0 Officer Preferred Option

3.1 The Officer preference is option 1. Many of the actions within the Declaration are already in place or are being acted upon and unlike the LGIU Manifesto there are no issues which are not in line with existing practices or are not already being addressed. Any issues identified by Members for progression beyond what is currently underway can be considered as part of future work on either Member Development or Democratic Renewal.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

One of the underlying objectives of the Declaration is to ensure equality of opportunity for anyone considering standing as a Councillor.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications to signing up to this Declaration. Existing levels of support for Councillors as funded in current budgets meet the requirements of the Declaration as set out in Appendix A.

Any issues identified by Members for further development may have financial implications and should this prove to be the case would be the subject of a future report and a growth bid before any commitment to action could be made.

SECTION 151 OFFICER’S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Office has been consulted and has no further comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None as a direct result of this report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letter from I&DeA – 22nd December 2008

Contact Officer: Gillian Noall

Telephone: 01524 582060

E-mail: gnoall@lancaster.gov.uk

LGIU Supporting Councillors Manifesto

Suggested Action	Current Position at Lancaster
1 Promote greater awareness and understanding of what a Councillor does so that more people know why they are needed and why they are important.	General information made available prior to the last City Council elections could be retained and kept permanently available on the website.
2 Provide information to all those who work closely with the Council to know more about how Councillors can get things done and the limits of their powers.	No specific facility in place to address this.
3 Provide clear information that explains how to become a Councillor and the responsibilities involved.	A leaflet and information on the website was made available prior to the last City Council elections. It is anticipated that this will be extended and improved for the 2011 elections and that information sessions for prospective candidates will be held at an earlier stage than in 2007.
4 Provide training after Elections so that Members are able to become excellent Councillors with a good understanding of the role and responsibilities.	An extensive induction programme was delivered after the elections in 2007. This includes a Member Handbook and other information permanently available on the intranet for Members to access as required. All Members have the opportunity to request additional support and/or development via the Personal Development Plan.
5 Call upon Government to revise the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity so that Councils can more actively encourage and better support Councillors to communicate with the public.	Lancaster City Council has not formally stated its support for this proposal. Government Consultation is ongoing on proposals to revise publicity codes.
6 Call upon Government to ensure Councillors and Local Government have all the powers and constitutional reforms they need to be able to get things done.	No direct contact has been made on this issue although the LGIU were advised of the Council's in principle support.
7 Develop mechanisms that devolve resources so that Local Councillors can effectively influence spending in their locality in line with their community leadership role.	This will be addressed through reports to Overview & Scrutiny in the first instance and then to the Audit Committee on the implications of new legislation coming into force in 2009 and the options for implementation.
8 Support the development and implementation of a charter containing minimum standards of support to help Local Councillors carry out their Councillor responsibilities effectively.	The Council has signed up to and been awarded the North West Member Development Charter. Standards must be maintained to retain Charter status which is reviewed every three years.

Suggested Action	Current Position at Lancaster
9 Develop with Councillors a clear role definition which sets out the main functions and duties and typical demands of being a Councillor. The role definition should also help to explain the Council's role to the public.	Work has been undertaken in the past to develop a 'job description' for Councillors in general and those carrying out specific roles such as Cabinet Members but this has not been brought to a conclusion.
10 Support the development of a voluntary national framework of allowances set by an independent panel. The panel should take into account differences in types and sizes of authorities and duties of Councillors to benchmark allowances. Councils should consider the framework when setting their own allowances scheme.	This Council's Independent Remuneration Panel utilise a well developed set of principles and comparisons with other authorities on which their recommendations for allowances are based. If Council were minded to support such a development, the views of the Independent Panel should be sought.
11 Review arrangements for working with Councillors so that Councils adopt modern ways of working, including making the best use of technology.	Lancaster City Council is well placed in terms of the use of technology by Councillors. The electronic publication of Council documentation is relatively advanced and progress is being made to utilise more of the committee management computer system as time allows.
12 Work with businesses to help working Councillors to manage their work/council time better; work with local employers to support employees who become Councillors as part of their corporate social responsibility programmes and to help them gain public recognition for it; and publicise the many skills that being a Councillor brings to the workplace, to the local authority, to the employee and the benefits that this can bring to employers.	No actions in place to address this.

I&DeA Supporting Councillors Declaration

Suggested Action	Current Position at Lancaster
1 Assist existing and prospective Councillors so they are aware of what is expected of them.	A leaflet and information on the website was made available prior to the last City Council elections. It is anticipated that this will be extended and improved for the 2011 elections and that information sessions for prospective candidates will be held at an earlier stage than in 2007. For existing Members a Member Handbook and other information permanently available on the intranet.
2 Provide all Councillors with administrative support to meet their individual needs, including the provision of adequate support staff to meeting Councillors; scrutiny, information and research needs.	A small Members' Services section of Democratic Services provides specific support to Members – dealing with all Member enquiries and research in addition to the Democratic Support section who support meetings and member development needs. All Members have the opportunity to request additional support and/or development via the Personal Development Plan.
3 Ensure that all Councillors are kept advised on how decisions are made and the opportunities open to them to influence these decisions.	An explanation of the decision making process is provided as part of the Member Development programme and advice on specific opportunities provided by the Head of Democratic Services as required.
4 Be aware of how much information we send to Councillors.	A Member information section is provided on the intranet for Members to access as required. A newsletter is also provided keeping Members up to date with new information. Officers provide briefing notes to relevant members when necessary and are constantly aware of the need to strike the right balance between keeping Members informed and 'information overload'. A protocol is in place regarding the provision of information and consultation with Ward members.
5 Provide space for Councillors to hold ward surgeries, meetings with constituents and to discuss Council business.	Member rooms are available at both Town Halls and rooms are set aside for each Group prior to Council meetings. Rooms can also be booked for Council business if required. Rooms can be provided for ward surgeries although these would have to be privately booked and paid for. The Council is not able to provide these free of charge.

Suggested Action	Current Position at Lancaster
6 Identify the “democracy” budget; current expenditure that funds Councillor support and development, supports scrutiny research and consultation, etc. Consider delegated budgets for improvements within the ward.	All aspects of democratic expenditure are separately identified in the Democratic Services budget. The issue of delegated Ward Councillor budgets will be addressed through reports to Overview & Scrutiny in the first instance and then to the Audit Committee on the implications of new legislation coming into force in 2009 and the options for implementation.
7 Ensure that all support is appropriate for individual Councillors and that there is clarity of what support and development opportunities are available.	The Member Development Charter is reviewed on an annual basis and is available on the intranet. The Member Development Programme is similarly available for Members at all times and forthcoming opportunities are highlighted via the Newsletter and on Member Notice boards. The Strategy and Programme are influenced by personal development interviews with all Councillors.
8 Ensure all Councillors have stationery and office equipment available to them both at home and when on council premises, to provide access to appropriate ICT and help Councillors to use such technology to improve efficiency and communication.	All Councillors are provided with a laptop, broadband access to the Council’s computer network and a printer. Printer cartridges and copying paper are available on request. Stationery and computer equipment is available in the Member rooms at each Town Hall. IT ‘drop in’ workshops are provided on a regular basis to assist members with the use of computers.
9 Conduct interviews with Councillors who are standing down/retiring/resigning.	‘Exit’ interviews have been conducted with Councillors who have resigned from Cabinet. This could be done for those resigning from the Council although there may be a capacity issue during the run up to City Council elections when the majority of these would be required.
10 Identify the personal development needs of Councillors, provide a member development programme.	All in place as part of the Member Development Strategy.

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

**Future Ownership of Royal Mail
23rd April 2009**

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT
To advise Members of a request from Ryedale District Council for support on the issue of retaining a publicly owned mail service.
This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider the request from Ryedale District Council on the issue of retaining a publicly owned mail service.

1.0 Report

1.1 The following motion was recently debated by Ryedale District Council:

1.2 *'The importance of a universal postal service is beyond question. Six day delivery is vital and the role of local post offices is key to community cohesion throughout Ryedale.*

These will only be possible by having a wholly publicly owned mail service.

So as to support the above, this Council resolves to:-

- *Call upon her Majesty's Government to stick to its election promise and*
 - (i) *keep the Royal Mail in 100% public ownership*
 - (ii) *return the 'profitable' parts of the service to Royal Mail.*
- *Call upon the Local Government Association to support this motion*
- *Circulate this motion to all other Local Authorities asking for their support*
- *Write to the MP for Ryedale asking him to oppose the part privatisation of the Royal Mail.'*

1.3 This Council is therefore being asked to consider supporting this motion.

2.0 Options

2.1 The Terms of Reference of the Council Business Committee provide for this Committee to determine the method of response and where necessary ratify responses on behalf of full Council to consultations.

2.2 Whilst a process is in place to deal with government and other consultation exercises in an efficient manner, these more 'ad hoc' issues are best considered on an individual basis.

2.3 The Committee is therefore requested to consider whether:

Option 1 – to take no action regarding the request from Ryedale District Council Declaration.

Option 2 – to refer the matter to full Council for debate by all Members.

3.0 Officer Preferred Option

3.1 There is no officer preferred option.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)	
None.	
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	
There are no financial implications as a result of this report	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
The S151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
None as a direct result of this report.	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Gillian Noall Telephone: 01524 582060 E-mail: gnoall@lancaster.gov.uk
Letter from Ryedale District Council – 27 th March 2009	