

## PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 September 2013, when the following Members were present:-

June Ashworth (Mayor)	David Kerr (Deputy Mayor)
Paul Aitchison	Tony Anderson
Josh Bancroft	Jon Barry
Mark Bevan	Eileen Blamire
Dave Brookes	Abbott Bryning
Keith Budden	Shirley Burns
Susie Charles	Roger Dennison
Sheila Denwood	Jonathan Dixon
Melanie Forrest	Paul Gardner
Mike Greenall	Janet Hall
Tim Hamilton-Cox	Janice Hanson
John Harrison	Billy Hill
Val Histed	Caroline Jackson
Joan Jackson	Tony Johnson
Andrew Kay	Geoff Knight
Karen Leytham	Roger Mace
Geoff Marsland	Terrie Metcalfe
Richard Newman-Thompson	Jane Parkinson
Ian Pattison	Margaret Pattison
Pam Pickles	Robert Redfern
Sylvia Rogerson	Richard Rollins
Ron Sands	Elizabeth Scott
Roger Sherlock	David Smith
Keith Sowden	Susan Sykes
Joyce Taylor	Malcolm Thomas
David Whitaker	Peter Williamson

**52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kathleen Graham, Helen Helme, Alycia James, Vikki Price, Emma Smith and Paul Woodruff.

**53 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2013 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this stage.

**55 ANNOUNCEMENT - CHARITY CYCLE RIDE**

The Mayor offered her thanks and congratulations to members of staff from Environmental Services who undertook the Way of the Roses cycle ride from Morecambe to Bridlington to raise money for one of the Mayor's chosen charities, North West Air Ambulance.

Phil Christenson, Salvatore Lebaldi, Tony Bolsover, Amie McAvoy, Gary Johnson, Damon Parkinson and Neil Morris from the Grounds Maintenance team took on the 170 mile challenge over three days.

The Mayor informed Councillors that their combined efforts had raised a magnificent £1,500 so far.

**56 ANNOUNCEMENT - CHARITY LUNCHEON**

The Mayor invited Councillors to a Charity Lunch being held at Lancaster Town Hall on Saturday 12 October, starting with a reception at noon. Tickets, which included a three course lunch and coffee, were on sale from the Mayor's office.

**57 ANNOUNCEMENT - MAYOR'S COFFEE MORNING**

The Mayor announced that on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October she would be holding a coffee morning from 10am to noon at Morecambe Golf Club. Councillors were invited to purchase tickets from the Mayor's office.

**58 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12**

The Mayor advised that no questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 12.

**59 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

The Mayor informed Members that no petitions or requests to address Council had been received from members of the public.

**60 LEADER'S REPORT**

The Leader presented her report updating Members on various issues since her last report to Council. There was one question from a Councillor which the Leader responded to.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**61 PROVISIONAL REVENUE, CAPITAL AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2012/13**

Councillor Bryning presented a report of Cabinet setting out various matters in connection with the overall outturn position for 2012/13. The report detailed a number of requests to carry forward revenue funding allocations over £10,000 for Council to consider for approval.

Members asked a number of questions which Councillor Bryning and the Chief Officer (Resources) responded to.

Councillor Bryning proposed the recommendations, as set out in the report, seconded by Councillor David Smith.

A vote was taken on the proposals which were clearly carried.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the requests for carry forward of underspent budgets, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
- (2) That the Annual Treasury Management report and Prudential Indicators, as set out in Appendix B of the report, be approved.

**62 MOTION ON NOTICE - LONG TERM RAIL STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

The following motion, of which notice had been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16, was moved by Councillor Rollins and seconded by Councillor Dennison:-

“The combined Local Authorities in the North of England with responsibility for transport have produced a Long-term Rail Strategy for the North of England. This document is now open for consultation.

The Council requests the appropriate officer(s) to respond to this consultation and request that the electrification of the Lancaster-Morecambe rail line be included in that strategy.”

An officer briefing note, prepared by the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) had been included with the agenda.

After some debate, a vote was taken and the motion was clearly carried.

**Resolved:-**

The combined Local Authorities in the North of England with responsibility for transport have produced a Long-term Rail Strategy for the North of England. This document is now open for consultation.

The Council requests the appropriate officer(s) to respond to this consultation and request that the electrification of the Lancaster-Morecambe rail line be included in that strategy.

**63 MOTION ON NOTICE - LEGAL AID BUDGET CUTS**

Councillor Whitaker had given the required notice to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16 to propose the following motion:-

“This Council notes with deep concern the coalition government’s cut to the national legal aid budget by £350 million, depriving many people of legal aid advice.

Council is additionally concerned that claimants including vulnerable residents needing help in cases of medical negligence, employment and welfare will no longer be entitled to legal aid.

These people will be denied justice as their cases will be unheard without the support of a legal aid lawyer.

This Council believes legal aid cuts in addition to the government cuts to public services are a further blow to those people already enduring hardship. Council believes that the impact of the cuts to legal aid will result in a two tier legal aid system.

This Council resolves to write to the Justice Minister urging him to reverse these cuts and to also urge the two MPs to lobby for this cut to be reversed in accordance with the well being of their constituents.”

Before proposing the motion, Councillor Whitaker informed Councillors that he wished to amend the wording of the last paragraph slightly, to:

“This Council resolves to write to the Justice Minister urging him to reverse these cuts and to send a copy to the two MPs.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Ian Pattison.

The Chief Officer (Governance) had prepared a briefing note to accompany the agenda giving background information about recent government cuts to legal aid.

There was a lengthy debate before the Mayor called for a vote and, with many voting for and few against, the motion was carried.

**Resolved:-**

This Council notes with deep concern the coalition government’s cut to the national legal

aid budget by £350 million, depriving many people of legal aid advice.

Council is additionally concerned that claimants including vulnerable residents needing help in cases of medical negligence, employment and welfare will no longer be entitled to legal aid.

These people will be denied justice as their cases will be unheard without the support of a legal aid lawyer.

This Council believes legal aid cuts in addition to the government cuts to public services are a further blow to those people already enduring hardship. Council believes that the impact of the cuts to legal aid will result in a two tier legal aid system.

This Council resolves to write to the Justice Minister urging him to reverse these cuts and to send a copy to the two MPs.

**64 LOCAL PLAN FOR LANCASTER DISTRICT: PROPOSED FORMAL PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND MORECAMBE AREA ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS**

Council considered the formal publication and submission to the Secretary of State of two Local Plan documents for the Lancaster District: the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) and Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) DPD. The accompanying report explained that further work was being undertaken on the Land Allocations DPD before it would be ready for Council to consider for publication and submission.

The Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) responded to a question about the report before Councillor Hanson proposed the recommendations in the report, seconded by Councillor Blamire:-

- “(1) That two Local Plan documents (the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) [Planning Policies] and Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) Development Plan Document) be formally published, and that a six-week period of consultation be arranged, during which representations on the soundness and legality of the documents may be made.
- (2) That, following the formal publication and closure of the period for representations, the DPDs, supporting information and representations received be submitted to the Secretary of State.”

Councillor Hamilton-Cox proposed an amendment:

“That the Local Plan does not proceed to publication until the Land Allocations document and guidance on sustainable construction is complete; that the core strategy is retained but that any detailed changes be brought to full Council, and that the Development Management DPD be amended to fit with the Core Strategy.”

Debate on the amendment followed. Councillors then voted, and the amendment was clearly lost.

Councillor Jackson proposed an addendum to the original motion, seconded by Councillor Kay:-

“That officers be asked to draft material that will look sympathetically at proposals coming forward for a major visitor attraction in Morecambe.”

Councillors Hanson and Blamire accepted this as a friendly amendment to the motion and a vote was taken, which was clearly carried.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That two Local Plan documents (the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) [Planning Policies] and Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) Development Plan Document) be formally published, and that a six-week period of consultation be arranged, during which representations on the soundness and legality of the documents may be made.
- (2) That, following the formal publication and closure of the period for representations, the DPDs, supporting information and representations received be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- (3) That officers be asked to draft material that will look sympathetically at proposals coming forward for a major visitor attraction in Morecambe.

**65 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES – LANCASTER DISTRICT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S TRUST BOARD**

Council considered a report submitted by the Head of Governance. The report noted that the Council had been asked to appoint a Member to the Board of the Lancaster District Children and Young People’s Trust. Members were asked to consider the basis for the appointment, which had previously been by virtue of position as Cabinet Member. The report noted that Cabinet responsibilities had changed and that the responsibility for Children and Young People no longer rested with one particular Cabinet portfolio holder.

Councillor Dennison proposed that the basis of appointment should be by virtue of role as Children and Young People’s Champion and nominated Councillor Taylor to fill the vacancy as the Council’s Champion for 2013/14. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Greenall.

The Mayor called for a vote on the proposition which was clearly carried.

**Resolved:**

That Councillor Taylor be appointed to the Board of the Lancaster District Children and Young People’s Trust by virtue of her position as the Council’s Children and Young People’s Champion for 2013/14.

**66 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.2 (Pages 8 - 9)**

The Mayor advised that 5 questions had been received by the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rules as follows:

- (1) Councillor Johnson to Councillor Hamilton-Cox regarding solar cells on Salt Ayre Sports Centre.
- (2) Councillor Johnson to Councillor Hamilton-Cox regarding security of valuable

- artefacts at Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.
- (3) Councillor Mace to Councillor Hanson regarding the Storey Gardens.
  - (4) Councillor Mace to Councillor Sands regarding attracting visitors to stay in Lancaster District
  - (5) Councillor Hill to Councillor Dixon regarding a telephone links for Taxis in Dalton Square.

Details of the questions and answers together with any supplementary questions and responses are included at Appendix A to the minutes.

## 67 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2013. There was one question from a Member which the Leader responded to.

***Resolved:***

That the minutes be noted.

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Mayor

(The meeting finished at 4.20 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,  
please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582057 or email  
dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk**

## **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON TO COUNCILLOR HAMILTON-COX**

*Can we have an update on the installation of solar cells on Salt Ayre Sports Centre?*

Councillor Hamilton-Cox informed Councillor Johnson that he was relieved to report that the Solar PV panels were switched on week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> August.

As his supplementary question, Councillor Johnson asked if Councillor Hamilton-Cox could confirm that the legal department would be directed to claim damages from the installer.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox told Councillor Johnson that the Council was waiting for the final account for the work and would take matters from there.

## **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHNSON TO COUNCILLOR HAMILTON-COX**

*As the two Town Halls, Lancaster and Morecambe, contain many valuable artefacts, when was the last time that the security arrangements were upgraded/examined as fit for purpose?*

Councillor Hamilton-Cox informed Councillor Johnson that the installation of a burglar alarm system at Morecambe Town Hall would improve security and other work was being looked at, whether the CCTV was fit for purpose; locking up of windows and doors; limiting the use of entrances; out of hours arrangements, etc.

Councillor Johnson clarified that he was asking not what was to be done, but when was the last time that the security arrangements were looked at.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox replied that a review of security arrangements for both town halls had been undertaken in the first half of 2012 initially this had been more concerned with movement within the buildings.

As his supplementary question, Councillor Johnson asked if all the artefacts were photographed and if the use of magic water or micro dotting had been considered.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox said no, that he was not aware of that.

## **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MACE TO COUNCILLOR HANSON**

*What options are under consideration for reopening the Storey Gardens and for the use of the Gardens in the context of plans for the future of the Storey Creative Industries Centre?*

Councillor Hanson replied:

We are not yet at the stage of considering specific options. The focus at present is to address the condition of the Garden's walls, ensure the trees in there are safe and get the gardens back to a reasonable standard. For the walls, following a structural survey, detailed works and cost estimates are being prepared as part of the year 1 delivery plan for improving Council property.

When we do get on to considering options, the guiding principle will be that future development and use of the garden should be integral to The Storey's operations, rather than it being a separate facility. The Storey is there to provide business space



for commercial rent, as well as a venue for public events. Community use is to be supported, but not to the extent that it undermines commercial or financial targets. There is an active 'Friends of' group who are keen to support the Council.

Putting all this into practice is expected to be a challenge.

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MACE TO COUNCILLOR SANDS**

*Casual observation of coach visits to the City suggest that Lancaster is a 'one night stop' at best. What proposals are being developed by the Council to ensure that Lancaster District showcases itself sufficiently well that visitors are persuaded to return and/or stay longer on their first visit?*

Councillor Sands replied:

The visitor and inward investment branding for the district has recently been refreshed and highlights the promotion of Lancaster and Morecambe Bay as the most up to date relevant brands with equal strength in the district and its surrounding sub region.

The corporate priorities under economic growth to promote the development of Lancaster Castle, the Canal Corridor North and widen the cultural and leisure offer of the city centre, together with targeted action in Morecambe through the action plan, will help to promote longer stays in the area. It must be remembered however that the local authorities can not do this by themselves. The full support of the business community is essential for success and the Council is working strongly within partnerships with that community, and other organisations, to secure progress.

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HILL TO COUNCILLOR DIXON**

*Can you please advise me when a phone link, which has been promised to the trade, is going to be installed at Lancaster Bus Station and Dalton Square?*

Councillor Dixon informed Councillor Hill that the proposed telephone link to Dalton Square for the use of passengers at the Bus Station who required a taxi, was being provided by United Utilities to assist the taxi trade during the closure of the bus station taxi rank as a result of the sewer works.

Any person wanting a taxi would be able to pick up a telephone handset in the bus station and be connected directly to a telephone at the taxi rank in Dalton Square.

Arrangements for the telephone link were being made by United Utilities with BT. There had been an initial delay due to a mixed response from the taxi trade and BT requiring a legal agreement with the landowner for a new junction box to be installed on their property but that had now been agreed.

Dalton Square, being a conservation area, meant that there were additional costs for an overhead connection and new pole in the garden area.

Provision of the phone link now required actions from Openreach to install the phone lines, United Utilities to purchase the phones and a specialist contractor to install the phones, provide associated power supplies and commission. In selecting suitable phones United Utilities had to look at weatherproof and vandal proof equipment, the purchase of which alone was in excess of £1,200. The total costs were expected to

be approximately £5k. All of these factors meant that this was taking longer than anticipated and, although an exact date could not be given at this stage, the date should be known within the next week or so.

As his supplementary question, Councillor Hill asked if Councillor Dixon could please carry on this good work and put more pressure on United Utilities.

Councillor Dixon agreed to monitor progress.