

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 17 July 2013, when the following Members were present:-

June Ashworth (Mayor)	David Kerr (Deputy Mayor)
Tony Anderson	Josh Bancroft
Mark Bevan	Eileen Blamire
Dave Brookes	Abbott Bryning
Keith Budden	Shirley Burns
Chris Coates	Roger Dennison
Sheila Denwood	Jonathan Dixon
Melanie Forrest	Paul Gardner
Kathleen Graham	Mike Greenall
Janet Hall	Tim Hamilton-Cox
Janice Hanson	Helen Helme
Billy Hill	Val Histed
Caroline Jackson	Joan Jackson
Tony Johnson	Tracey Kennedy
Geoff Knight	Karen Leytham
Roger Mace	Geoff Marsland
Terrie Metcalfe	Richard Newman-Thompson
Jane Parkinson	Ian Pattison
Margaret Pattison	Vikki Price
Robert Redfern	Sylvia Rogerson
Richard Rollins	Ron Sands
Elizabeth Scott	Roger Sherlock
David Smith	Keith Sowden
Joyce Taylor	Malcolm Thomas
David Whitaker	Paul Woodruff

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Aitchison, Jon Barry, Susie Charles, John Harrison, Alycia James, Andrew Kay, Pam Pickles, Emma Smith, Susan Sykes and Peter Williamson.

37 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2013 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this stage.

39 ANNOUNCEMENTS - FORMER COUNCILLOR ALBERT THORNTON

The Mayor reported the sad death of former Councillor Albert Thornton. Albert was elected to the Heysham South Ward in May 1995 and served a period of 4 years before embarking on a lengthy career as a County Councillor.

Having lost his wife Lillian only last year, Albert's own health began to fail and he became blind whilst still serving as a County Councillor. He did not allow this to prevent him from serving his constituents and continued to work for them as best he could until his retirement from County earlier this year.

Albert died peacefully in the Royal Lancaster Infirmary on 19 June 2013 at the age of 87. He would be sadly missed.

Members stood in a minute's silence in his memory.

40 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.

41 ADDRESS TO COUNCIL - HOME BOARDING OF DOGS

Mr Stuart Langhorn addressed Council about licensing of home boarding of dogs. A copy of his address had been circulated along with supporting documents.

Councillor Dixon, Chairman of the Licensing Regulatory Committee responded to Mr Langhorn's address.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Langhorn and advised him that his address would be referred to the Licensing Regulatory Committee for consideration.

42 PETITION TO COUNCIL - MORECAMBE ROAD BUS USERS

Mrs Yvonne Whiston presented a petition on behalf of her mother and other bus users and gave an address to Council regarding the withdrawal of bus services on the Morecambe Road route.

The Mayor thanked Mrs Whiston and informed her that the petition would be forwarded to the County Council, which provided bus travel in partnership with local bus operators. In addition, Mrs Whiston's address would be referred to the City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

43 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader presented her report updating Members on various issues since her last report to Council. She then responded to a number of questions from Councillors.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

44 CONSTITUTION - MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor Mace, Vice-Chairman of the Council Business Committee, presented a referral report regarding the Procedure Rules relating to Members' questions on notice at Council meetings, following consideration of the matter by the Committee on 27 June 2013.

The Procedure Rules required that questions be submitted to the Chief Executive three working days prior to the Council meeting and that questions must be relevant to the powers or duties of the Council or must affect the district. The referral report asked Council to consider a recommendation from Council Business Committee to amend the Procedure Rules to include a right of appeal to the Mayor for any Member whose question on notice is rejected by the Chief Executive as not relevant.

Councillor Mace responded to several questions from Councillors before proposing the recommendation of Council Business Committee, seconded by Councillor Hall:-

“(1) That the Council Procedure Rules be amended to allow any Members whose question on notice to Council has been refused by the Chief Executive, on the grounds that it did not satisfy procedure rule 13.4(b), the right of appeal to the Mayor.”

A lengthy debate followed before a vote was taken and the proposition was clearly carried.

Resolved:

(1) That the Council Procedure Rules be amended to allow any Members whose question on notice to Council has been refused by the Chief Executive, on the grounds that it did not satisfy procedure rule 13.4(b), the right of appeal to the Mayor.

45 MEMBER CHAMPIONS - ROLE AND REMIT (Pages 9 - 13)

Council considered a referral report from the Council Business Committee, presented by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mace. The report asked Council to approve formal arrangements for Member Champions, to be included in the Council's Constitution.

The formal arrangements were set out in two documents, a model protocol and a role definition for Champions for inclusion in Part 5, Section 5 of the Constitution. The report also recommended that Council confirm that appointments of Member Champions should be made at each annual council meeting, with a consequential amendment to Council Procedure Rule 1.1 and that the role of Champion should only be open to non-Cabinet Members.

The report asked Council to note that Council Business Committee had asked the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to consider amending the Members' Allowances Scheme to permit reasonable travel and subsistence claims to be made by Member Champions in carrying out their roles. The Mayor informed Council that, since the report had been drafted, the IRP had met and agreed to the request to allow Member Champions to claim for reasonable travel and subsistence costs incurred carrying out their duties as Champions.

Councillor Mace responded to several questions from Councillors before proposing the recommendations of Council Business Committee as set out in the report.

It was then moved by Councillor Rollins and seconded by Councillor Burns, by way of an amendment:

"That the protocol be amended at Paragraph 9 by removing bullet point 3, which refers to a support officer in the Democratic Support team being designated to support the Council's Champions."

There was some debate on the amendment before a vote was taken and the amendment was clearly lost.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion which the Mayor declared clearly carried.

Resolved:

- (1) That the attached documents be added to the Council's Constitution as Section 5 of Part 6 (Appointments and Designations - Member Champions).
- (2) That Council confirms that the appointment of Member Champions be made at each Annual Council meeting and that this item be included in the business for Annual Council shown in Council procedure rule 1.1 (Part 4, Section 1 of the Constitution).
- (3) That Council approves a generic role definition for Member Champions (as attached at Appendix 2) and confirms that Member Champion appointments be open to non-Cabinet Members only.
- (4) To note that the Independent Remuneration Panel has agreed to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme to permit reasonable travel and subsistence claims to be made to Member Champions in carrying out their roles.

46 RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor Mace, Vice-Chairman of the Council Business Committee, presented a referral report regarding the audio recording of Council meetings. This issue had been referred to the Committee following debate on a motion to Council on 13 May 2013 requesting that audio recording equipment be purchased and recordings of meetings be made publicly available on the Council's website.

Councillor Mace responded to several questions from Councillors before proposing the request from Council Business Committee:-

"That speakers in Council meetings declare their names before speaking, always use a microphone and that sound recordings be prepared on an experimental basis and made available to Members and officers on request, prior to further consideration of the subject in budget discussions for 2014/15."

Councillor Mace also proposed an addendum:

"That recording should stop when a restricted item is being discussed and the requirement for giving one's name and speaking into the microphone should be limited to the period of the experiment and that a further decision on continuing the experiment should be made after 3 council meetings have been recorded."

There followed a lengthy debate at the conclusion of which a recorded vote was requested in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 20.4.

A vote was then taken with Members voting as shown below:-

16 for the motion: Councillors Brookes, Graham, Hamilton-Cox, Helme, Hill, Histed, Caroline Jackson, Joan Jackson, Johnson, Mace, Parkinson, Rogerson, Rollins, Sowden, Thomas and Woodruff.

29 against the motion: Councillors Anderson, Ashworth, Bancroft, Bevan, Blamire, Bryning, Budden, Burns, Dennison, Dixon, Gardner, Greenall, Hall, Hanson, Kerr, Leytham, Marsland, Metcalfe, Newman-Thompson, Parkinson, Ian Pattison, Margaret Pattison, Price, Redfern, Sands, Scott, Sherlock, David Smith, Taylor and Whitaker.

3 abstentions: Councillors Coates, Forrest and Kennedy.

The Mayor declared the motion lost.

47 MOTION ON NOTICE - LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Councillor Hamilton-Cox proposed the following motion having given the required notice to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16:-

"This Council notes that the coalition government is making disproportionate cuts to funding of local government, and calls on it to reverse this policy.

This Council advocates that Britain should join the 11 European countries that have pledged to introduce a transaction tax on all financial exchanges, including shares, bonds and derivatives, in the process targeting those who precipitated the financial crisis and going some way to paying off the national debt.

It should be part of a wider programme that proceeds with the urgent reform of the banks, separating the high-street and investment arms, a crackdown on high-earners' and corporate tax avoidance, and proper regulation of the markets.

Further, the revenue raised should be used, among other things, to reverse cuts in funding to local government.

Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government informing them of council's resolution."

An officer briefing note was attached which included the executive summary from the Government's Spending Review and the Local Government Association's briefing published on 26 June 2013.

Councillor Brookes seconded the motion.

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Newman-Thompson to replace the words "to local government" at the end of paragraph four with "of public services."

With the agreement of his seconder, Councillor Hamilton-Cox accepted this as a friendly amendment.

At the conclusion of the debate there was a request for a recorded vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 20.4 and Members voted as follows:-

29 for the motion: Councillors Anderson, Ashworth, Bancroft, Bevan, Blamire, Brookes, Bryning, Coates, Dixon, Forrest, Gardner, Hall, Hamilton-Cox, Hanson, Caroline Jackson, Kennedy, Leytham, Metcalfe, Newman-Thompson, Ian Pattison, Margaret Pattison, Price, Redfern, Sands, Scott, Sherlock, David Smith, Taylor and Whitaker.

13 against the motion: Councillors Burns, Dennison, Graham, Helme, Hill, Joan Jackson, Mace, Parkinson, Rogerson, Rollins, Sowden, Thomas and Woodruff.

4 abstentions: Councillors Greenall, Histed, Johnson and Marsland.

The Mayor declared the motion carried.

Resolved:-

- (1) This Council notes that the coalition government is making disproportionate cuts to funding of local government, and calls on it to reverse this policy.
- (2) This Council advocates that Britain should join the 11 European countries that have pledged to introduce a transaction tax on all financial exchanges, including shares, bonds and derivatives, in the process targeting those who precipitated the financial crisis and going some way to paying off the national debt.

It should be part of a wider programme that proceeds with the urgent reform of the banks, separating the high-street and investment arms, a crackdown on high-earners' and corporate tax avoidance, and proper regulation of the markets.

Further, the revenue raised should be used, among other things, to reverse cuts in funding of public services.

- (3) That the Chief Executive write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government informing them of council's resolution.

(Council adjourned at this point for a ten minute break in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1, reconvening at 4.40pm.)

48 CORPORATE PLAN 2013-14 - REVISED VISION

Council considered a report of the Chief Executive presenting a revised draft vision for inclusion in the Council's Corporate Plan 2013/14.

Councillor Rollins, seconded by Councillor Johnson, proposed:-

- "(1) That the revised draft vision be included in the Corporate Plan 2013/14."

There was no debate, a vote was taken and the proposition was clearly carried.

Resolved:

- (1) That the revised draft vision be included in the Corporate Plan 2013/14.

49 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Council considered a report submitted by the Head of Governance. The report noted that a vacancy had arisen for the City Council representative on the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee. Council noted that it had decided that the appointment should be filled by way of nominations and voting at full Council and that, because it was a scrutiny body, only a non-Cabinet Member could be appointed.

Councillor Metcalfe nominated Councillor Gardner to fill the vacancy. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Newman-Thompson.

Councillor Rogerson then nominated Councillor Parkinson, seconded by Councillor Joan Jackson.

The Mayor called for a vote and, with 27 votes for Councillor Gardner and 11 votes for Councillor Parkinson, the Mayor declared Councillor Gardner appointed.

Resolved:

That Councillor Gardner be appointed as the City Council representative on the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee until May 2015.

50 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13.2 (Pages 14 - 16)

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

- (1) Councillor Mace to Councillor Dixon regarding the byelaw requiring Hackney Carriages to return to specified ranks.
- (2) Councillor Whitaker to Councillor Hanson regarding Chatsworth Gardens.
- (3) Councillor Mace to Councillor Hamilton-Cox regarding car parking.

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

51 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013. The Leader responded to Members' questions.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

Mayor

(The meeting finished at 4.55 p.m.)

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

MEMBER CHAMPIONS PROTOCOL

Member Champions have evolved in this Council as a result of Initiatives taken by this Council in wishing to focus on member activity on certain aspects of the Council's business and functions. The role and remit is set out below and a generic role definition is appended.

THE APPOINTMENT AND ROLE OF A MEMBER CHAMPION

1. A Champion is a non-executive councillor appointed by the Council to provide a focus on a specific area of the Council's business or where a community group needs to ensure it is given due regard in relation to the activities of the Council and of its partners in local governance.
2. Member Champion must not be Members of the Council's Cabinet.
3. The Council will identify interests to be championed and will appoint named Councillors to champion a specific interest at its Annual Meeting or during the year for the rest of the municipal year and thereafter appointed for each municipal year at Annual Council.
4. Champions may be re-appointed and there is no limit to their term of office.
5. Within the context of the interest being championed, and as part of their overall and individual community leadership responsibilities, a Champion will:
 - Work with Members and Officers within the Council to maintain efficient, effective and relevant services and policies.
 - Exert influence on relevant external partners and bodies in their decision-making and planning.
 - Act as a catalyst for change and improvement.
6. By appointing a member as a Champion, the Council is empowering that member to act in that capacity. It follows, therefore, that the Council should put in place such arrangements as it thinks appropriate to support the Champion in that capacity.

THE PARAMETERS OF THE CHAMPION ROLE

7. The above role is set in the context of the specific interest or theme. The following parameters apply to the role:
 - All Champions must act reasonably in the role.
 - All Champions must recognise and work effectively within the political management and working arrangements agreed by the Council.

8. A Champion

- Is effectively given authority by the Council to take all reasonable actions judged by the member as being necessary to perform the role of Champion.
- Cannot commit the Council in any way that is contrary to established policy, budget and practice, but may confirm a Council position, as stated in published policy.
- Cannot make decisions that bind the Council.
- Is a recognised media contact on matters relating to the interest being championed, but is expected to keep the relevant Cabinet Member and/or Chairman informed of such contact.
- Is entitled to have access to information held by the Council relating to the interest being championed and access to a reasonable amount of officer time to discuss that information.
- The Champion's programme of activities should reflect the Council's overall priorities, but the Champion may include such aspects as seem to him/her to be relevant for immediate attention, as long as overall priorities are not directly prejudiced by those aspects.

SUPPORT FOR CHAMPIONS IN THEIR ROLE

9. Taking all the above into account, the Council will:

- Take steps to promote understanding within the Council of the role of a Member Champion and describe how it relates to other member level functions.
- Promote similar understanding among its working partners, external bodies and the local community.
- Arrange for a support officer in the Democratic Support team be designated to support the Council's Champions. This support will be for the functionality of the role – administration and research - not the professional input.
- Ensure that the professional lead officer(s) relating to each championed interest are aware of the Champion roles that affect them and the rights of Champions to access/discuss information about the service.
- Require each Champion to report annually to the Council about their programme of activity and how they have contributed to the achievement of the Council's overall priorities and to report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as and when required, upon any issues arising.
- Put in place appropriate skills development opportunities for Champions within the Council's Member Development function.

- Keep under review the relevance of the role of member Champions in the context of the Council's Scheme of Member Allowances and to make a request to the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider this at such time in the future, should it be felt to be appropriate.

INTERNAL WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

10. The Champion will:

- Liaise regularly with Cabinet members whose portfolios are relevant to the role (for some generic interests this will be all or many of them).
- Monitor the notice of key decisions and seek information from the relevant officers and Cabinet members about forthcoming business and exert influence on behalf of the interest.
- Monitor Overview and Scrutiny work plans and activity and seek information and offer views on relevant review subjects and exert influence on behalf of the interest.
- Take advice from the appointed lead functional officer and the relevant lead professional officer(s).
- Seek to place appropriate items on relevant Council meeting agendas.
- Keep other councillors up to date with activities within the interest.
- Generally promote the interest.

11. Cabinet members will:

- Acknowledge the right of Champions to be consulted on matters relating to their interest.
- Ensure there is appropriate engagement or consultation with Champions in the formulation of policy and other Executive matters and that any views are contained in the information provided to decision-makers.
- Consider inviting the relevant Champion to represent the Council at any relevant conference/seminar on the subject matter of the interest on the basis that the Champion will report back to the Cabinet member.
- Take full account of any views offered by Champions prior to any Cabinet taking decisions on matters within the interest, and demonstrate this in the record of the decision.

12. Overview and Scrutiny members will:

- Acknowledge the right of Champions to be consulted and to participate in discussion on matters relating to their interest.
- Ensure there is appropriate engagement or consultation with Champions in the formulation of policy and in service review activity.

- Ensure Champions are specifically invited to be contributors to any reviews that have a direct bearing on the interest (recognising the right of a Champion to attend as an observer at any such session).
 - Ensure that opportunity is provided for Champions to contribute to, or comment on, the work programme of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body.
13. Officers will:
- Ensure there is appropriate engagement or consultation with relevant Champions where the issue clearly relates to the interest.
 - Co-operate fully with Champions in enabling them to perform their functions and to discuss directly with Champions and Cabinet members where proposed actions might prejudice Council or other priorities.

EXTERNAL WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

14. The Champion:
- Will need to acknowledge that there is no statutory authority for the member Champion role.
 - Will need to recognise that the Council does have some legal powers with regard to the scrutiny of external bodies and other working relationships with outside bodies arising from legal provisions.
 - Will monitor and work closely with partner bodies in the field of the interest being championed.
 - Will communicate on behalf of the interest group and the Council to outside bodies.
 - May be the Council's representative on certain relevant external bodies.
 - Will identify the most relevant community bodies whose work is associated with the interest and foster good working relationships with those groups.
 - Will take steps to promote within the wider community the specific issues on which the Champion is to focus and to provide opportunities for local engagement – involving Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Lead Members, as appropriate.

MEMBER CHAMPION ROLE DEFINITION

The principal purpose of the Member Champion role is to:

1. Promote the interest within the Council, having regard to the Council's overall corporate and service priorities.
2. Take a particular interest in the needs and wishes of any client group relevant to the interest being championed.
3. Ensure that decision-makers within the Council and externally are aware of issues and opportunities related to the interest.
4. Contribute to the continuous improvement of services and functions related to the interest and be a catalyst for change.
5. Ensure good practice within the authority relating to the interest is shared and that examples of good practice elsewhere are brought to the attention of members and officers.
6. Keep up to date with all relevant matters connected with the interest.

The primary functional responsibilities are as follows:

1. Engage with relevant local and national bodies and communities of place, culture and interest, to promote the interest, attending meetings as necessary.
2. Monitor the work programmes of the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to work proactively with lead members to advise, identify, challenge and exert influence.
3. Ensure all members of the Council, in particular Cabinet members, Overview and Scrutiny chairmen and the Council's officers are made aware of the needs, issues and support available relating to the interest.
4. Seek appropriate opportunities to promote the interest further with members and officers through seminars, other awareness raising events and personal attendance at meetings.
5. Liaise with relevant partner bodies on matters relating to the interest, and seek opportunities for direct participation in issues being considered, when appropriate.
6. Undertake personal development and training to ensure effective performance in the role of Member Champion.
7. Present an Annual Report to the Council on the work achieved during the previous reporting period and priorities identified for the future.
8. Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required.

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MACE TO COUNCILLOR DIXON

In view of the difficulties allegedly faced by Hackney Carriage operators while work is being carried out by United Utilities at the Lancaster bus station, will the Chairman of Licensing Committee take steps to initiate the revocation or suspension for a limited period of the byelaw requiring hackney carriages to return to specified ranks?"

Councillor Dixon replied:

Like many other councils throughout the country, this Council has byelaws which regulate many aspects of the operation of hackney carriages. These follow the government Model for such byelaws.

This particular byelaw means that if a vehicle is available for hire, it should proceed to a designated rank, and if that rank is fully occupied, the vehicle should proceed to another rank. Indeed the highway authority's approval of a rank is required on public highways.

If the byelaw were revoked, which would require the confirmation of the Secretary of State, there would be no control over where hackney carriages could ply for hire. This would create uncertainty for the public, and could also create traffic congestion and obstruction, as well as other road safety issues. As a result enforcement would become more difficult with unknown costs.

There would be absolutely no recourse open to licensing officers to deal with complaints from any member of the public who might be unfortunate to have a taxi rank forming outside of their home, or indeed a school, private land or any other premises. Passing the bucket to the police and civil enforcement would put a strain on the strong working relationship that this city council has with both bodies. The police and county council are facing their own budget restraints and they certainly do not need extra case work that this council is able to minimize.

Last year mass objections to the proposal to position a rank on Queen Street in Morecambe were received by committee. Any removal of the byelaw or non-enforcement would mean that the hackney carriage vehicles could rank on Queen Street, making a mockery of the consultation process. This argument could easily be extrapolated to other areas as the byelaws apply to the entire district.

Hackney carriages can rank on Dalton Square at any time and Wood Street car park after 7.00 pm. There are other ranks too such as North Road, Common Garden Street & Church Street. Therefore the issue has never been the number of rank spaces but their locations, notably Dalton Square. I am keeping the rank situation under constant review and have asked for the feasibility of various alternatives to be considered and have been in communication with the Cabinet member for Highways. A phone link to reconnect the bus station with Dalton Square is being installed shortly which has had the support of many traders. The final decision rests with Highways. However, it is not my intention to ask the Licensing Regulatory Committee to consider the suspension of the byelaw due to the uncertainty it will create.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Mace asked what proposals were being made to put an end to the issues that had arisen with the Taxi trade.

Councillor Dixon said that he hoped that both parties wanted to resolve the issues and he felt that things could be resolved although it might take some time.

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WHITAKER TO COUNCILLOR HANSON

People who live within the area of Chatsworth Gardens are still waiting for the environment in which they live in to be given the attention it deserves because they are angry that the area in which they live in is continuing to be blighted by boarded up properties and properties that visibly require attention with urgency.

The work that was supposed to be commencing on Chatsworth Gardens is long overdue and people are frustrated. Is there a realistic date and timescale for this work to begin?

Councillor Hanson replied:

At this time we do not have an estimated start and finish date. With regard to timescale, the council issued an invitation to tender on the 07 June and has now received the tender submissions. Interviews will take place and we hope to make a selection by the 19 July.

Once the selection process is completed there is a two month period where we expect the developer to work up further details on both the scheme and the work with the council on setting out the Heads of Terms under which we will contract. Once agreement has been obtained in principle a report will be prepared for cabinet detailing this. It is aimed to take a further report to the 8 October Cabinet meeting which will initially brief members with a more detailed report to sign an agreement off.

The HCA need to modify the original funding agreement to take account of the altered scheme from what we originally contracted. It is hoped that this will be a swift and painless exercise, but it is not something in our control.

If the potential for a private developer to take on Chatsworth Gardens does not offer better value and outcomes than our original scheme then this will be reported to Cabinet, either immediately after the initial procurement process concludes in July or when development of the scheme and the Heads of Terms passes the two month period in mid-September without agreement. If this does occur then the council would need to rapidly progress the original scheme, as detailed in the Cabinet report.

We can't give an exact start and finish date for the tendered scheme as this will depend on the model / developer chosen. If the form and negotiations on a development agreement progress, we should be looking at a start on site in October/November. I would estimate a private sector led programme of refurbishment on this scale to take around 18 months to two years given the complexities of the site.

As his supplementary question, Councillor Whitaker asked if Councillor Hanson would keep Councillors informed and she replied that she would and as soon as she had any news she would send it round.

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MACE TO COUNCILLOR HAMILTON-COX

Please provide statistics to indicate parking fees collected from Council-owned car parks in Morecambe and in Lancaster on a month by month basis for the past 36 months, and on the basis of this data, comment on the implications for the District of targeting car parking revenues as a source of increased net income for the Council.

Councillor Mace added that he understood that the information would take some time to collate and he would accept a written answer to the question, which Councillor Hamilton-Cox agreed to provide and to circulate to all other Members as soon as it was available.