

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 23 June 2021, when the following Members were present:-

Mike Greenall (Mayor)	Geoff Knight (Deputy Mayor)
Tony Anderson	Paul Anderton
Richard Austen-Baker	Mandy Bannon
Phillip Black	Alan Biddulph
Victoria Boyd-Power	Dave Brookes
Keith Budden	Roger Cleet
Tim Dant	Roger Dennison
Gina Dowding	Adrian Duggan
Merv Evans	Kevin Frea
Andrew Gardiner	June Greenwell
Mel Guilding	Tim Hamilton-Cox
Janice Hanson	Colin Hartley
Tricia Heath	Caroline Jackson
Joan Jackson	Debbie Jenkins
Sarah Knight	Jack Lenox
Erica Lewis	Cary Matthews
Abi Mills	Jack O'Dwyer-Henry
Faye Penny	Joyce Pritchard
Robert Redfern	John Reynolds
Oliver Robinson	Alistair Sinclair
Paul Stubbins	Malcolm Thomas
Sandra Thornberry	David Whitaker
Anne Whitehead	David Whitworth
John Wild	Jason Wood
Peter Yates	Joanna Young

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Abbott Bryning, Jake Goodwin, Mandy King, Stuart Morris, Jean Parr, Stewart Scothern and Katie Whearty.

18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2021 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Gardiner declared an 'other interest' as a Lancashire County Councillor in relation to Item 16, the Motion on Notice regarding Education Recovery. (Minute No. 31 refers.)

20 ANNOUNCEMENTS - COUNCILLOR STEPHIE BARBER

The Mayor reminded Councillors of the sad death of Councillor Stephe Barber on 23 May.

Stephe was elected as a Conservative Councillor for the Bare Ward of the City Council on May 2019. She would be sadly missed by her family, former colleagues and many friends.

Stephe's funeral was held on 10 June 2021.

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

The Mayor informed Councillors that he would be re-ordering the agenda slightly to take Item 14, the Progress Update on the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst immediately after Item 6, Questions from the Public.

21 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

The Mayor advised that one question had been received from a member of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11. He invited Mr Tony Breakall to put his question to the Council.

Mr Breakall put his question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Caroline Jackson, as follows:

In the section headed 'Preparation', the briefing note refers to a new housing figure of 9185 in the garden village and elsewhere in south Lancaster - new in that this figure didn't appear in the Local Plan adopted by Council as recently as July 2020, nor have local residents ever been consulted about this figure. The Local Plan referred to just 3500 houses in the garden village, of which only 1205 were expected to be built in the Local Plan period up to 2031. The first mention of 9185 houses appears in connection with the HIF bid and was announced by HM Treasury as part of the Government's 2020 budget.

My question is:

Are the Council and local residents going to be at financial risk if the HIF target of 9185 houses is not achieved or if the costs of the road schemes to be funded by HIF exceed their current estimates?

A copy of the question had been circulated at the commencement of the meeting.

The Leader explained that the HIF funding programme was an agreement between the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Lancashire County Council to forward fund infrastructure works in South Lancaster. In addition to the award of funding, the proposed costs were anticipated to be met by developer contributions, so it was envisaged that there would be no direct financial risk as part of this arrangement to Lancaster City Council or its residents. The s151 Officer had indicated that legal clarification would need to be obtained around the financing and other issues to provide assurances that the Council would not be placed at financial risk.

Mr Breakall did not ask a supplementary question. The Mayor thanked him for attending the meeting to put his question to the Leader.

22 SOUTH LANCASTER GROWTH CATALYST: PROGRESS UPDATE

The Leader presented a report to update Councillors on progress with the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst (SLGC). Further briefings for Councillors would be arranged for weeks beginning 12th and 19th July 2021.

The Leader responded to numerous questions from Members.

The Monitoring Officer clarified the legal position regarding the route for any future decision-making on the SLGC. Decision(s) would be made by Cabinet if they were within the existing budget and policy framework. Any decision(s) falling outside the framework would be made by Council.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

23 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES

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

24 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.

25 EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS (Page 11)

The Leader presented to Council the names and portfolio areas of her Cabinet, as shown below.

Councillor Caroline Jackson	Leader
Councillor Kevin Frea	Deputy Leader with Climate Action portfolio
Councillor Dave Brookes	Environmental Services
Councillor Gina Dowding	Strategic Planning and Place Making

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox	Sustainable Economic Prosperity
Councillor Tricia Heath	Economic Recovery
Councillor Erica Lewis	Corporate Services
Councillor Cary Matthews	Housing
Councillor Sandra Thornberry	Arts, Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing
Councillor Anne Whitehead	Finance and Resources

The report confirmed that Councillor Whitehead, as the Portfolio holder for Finance and Resources, would serve on the Shared Services for Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee with the Leader. The Deputy Leader and the Leader would serve on the Lancaster and South Cumbria Joint Committee, with Councillors Lewis and Matthews as named substitutes.

Full details of the remit of each portfolio had been included with the agenda. The Leader announced that there had been one addition to the list; Communications had been added to the Leader's responsibility area.

(The updated list is appended to these minutes.)

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

26 MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Councillor Thomas presented his Annual Report for his Mayoral Year 2020/21.

Resolved:

That the report be received.

27 CABINET MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORTS

Councillors Brookes, Frea, Dowding, Hamilton-Cox, Jackson (Caroline), Lewis and Whitehead had submitted progress reports on the Cabinet portfolio areas they held at the end of the last municipal year, in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution. It was noted that some annual reports had not been submitted.

Each Member presented their annual report in turn, responding to any questions raised by Councillors.

During the presentation of his report, Councillor Hamilton-Cox explained that the business case in relation to the Digital Strategy would now be considered at the September Cabinet meeting, rather than the July meeting as stated in the report. This was because existing infrastructure in relation to fibre-optic cable had recently been identified by the Head of ICT.

Resolved:

That the reports of Cabinet Members Brookes, Dowding, Hamilton-Cox, Jackson (Caroline), Lewis and Whitehead be received.

28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

In accordance with the Constitution, an Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21

had been published and was presented to Council by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during that year, Councillor Heath.

Councillor Duggan, Chair of Budget and Performance Panel, spoke about the work his committee had undertaken during that year.

Both Chairs responded to a number of questions from Councillors and thanked officers in Democratic Services, Stephen Metcalfe and Jenny Kay, for their support during the year.

Resolved:

That the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21 be received.

29 AUDIT COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

In accordance with the Council's Constitution the Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor Stubbins, presented the 2019/21 Report of the Audit Committee and answered a number of questions.

Resolved:

That the report be received.

30 MOTION ON NOTICE - BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT AND SANCTIONS (BDS) MOVEMENT

Councillor O'Dwyer-Henry proposed the following motion having given the required notice to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15:-

"Lancaster City Council notes:

- That Palestinians have endured the longest ongoing refugee crisis in the world, and respects the right of return as enshrined in international law;
- That the recent escalation of violence was instigated by the attempt to evict 28 Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah area of Jerusalem as part of an ongoing and systematic campaign of illegal Israeli settlements and forced displacement of Palestinians from their land;
- That during the violence in May 2021, 256 Palestinians were killed, 66 of whom were children, whilst 13 people were killed in Israel;
- That Israel's military operation in Gaza amounts to the ongoing ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and illegal settlement expansion represents flagrant breaches of international law;
- That a growing list of human rights organisations have determined that Israel's actions amount to apartheid, including the latest report by Human Rights Watch.

This Council resolves to:

- Express its support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement;
- Condemn Israel's breaches of international law and killing of Palestinian civilians;
- Write to the Lancashire County Pension Fund (part of the Local Government Pension Scheme) and the Local Pensions Partnership urging that they adopt policies requiring them to divest from all companies active in illegal Israeli settlements in Palestine and all arms companies which supply weapons to Israel.

Councillor Dowding seconded the motion, which had been accompanied by a briefing note

from officers.

A number of questions were put to Councillor O'Dwyer-Henry, which he responded to.

In response to a request from Councillor Dennison, the Monitoring Officer provided advice regarding interests of any Councillors in receipt of a Local Government Pension from the Lancashire fund, making it clear that the Council would not be making any decision regarding the Pension Fund.

There was a lengthy debate before an amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Stubbins. This was to replace the first and second bullet points of the resolution with one bullet point, worded as follows:-

“Express its support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement’s demands that Israel ends injustices that infringe international laws and Palestinian rights”

With the agreement of the meeting and his seconder, Councillor O'Dwyer-Henry accepted this as a friendly amendment.

At the conclusion of the debate a vote was taken. With 26 Members voting for the motion, 11 against and 13 abstentions, the motion was clearly carried.

Resolved:-

Lancaster City Council notes:

- That Palestinians have endured the longest ongoing refugee crisis in the world, and respects the right of return as enshrined in international law;
- That the recent escalation of violence was instigated by the attempt to evict 28 Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah area of Jerusalem as part of an ongoing and systematic campaign of illegal Israeli settlements and forced displacement of Palestinians from their land;
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31 MOTION ON NOTICE - EDUCATION RECOVERY

The following motion of which notice had been given to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15 was moved by Councillor Penny and seconded by Councillor Frea:-

"Lancaster City Council notes that:

The Government published its plans for education recovery after the pandemic on 2nd June. Sir Kevan Collins, appointed by the Prime Minister as the Government's Education Recovery Commissioner had judged that some £15bn was needed to repair the damage done to the nation's pupils because of Covid. The Government's offer of £1.4bn falls far short and is inadequate. The Education Policy Institute have calculated that this amounts to £50 per pupil per year. This contrasts with £1,600 per pupil in the USA and £2,500 per pupil in the Netherlands. There are no quick or cheap fixes if we are to build back better from the pandemic and have an education system that supports high standards and strong mental health for everyone.

Separately, the Department for Education has changed the census used to calculate Pupil Premium funding for the most disadvantaged pupils. This means that £150 million is being taken away from young people and schools most in need. We are not going to level up the country on the backs of the poorest children.

Lancaster City Council resolves:

To lobby the Government to value and invest in all our children, so they are supported to learn, succeed, and go on to have bright futures.

To write to the Prime Minister and call on the Government to scale up its ambition for our children and young people and give our education system the resources they need to ensure that no child is left behind. The Government should show it is serious about levelling up by putting in the investment called for by its own former Education Recovery Commissioner."

An officer briefing note had been included on the agenda to assist debate.

There were no questions put to the proposer of the motion and no debate.

A vote was taken and the motion was very clearly carried.

Resolved:-

Lancaster City Council notes that:

The Government published its plans for education recovery after the pandemic on 2nd June. Sir Kevan Collins, appointed by the Prime Minister as the Government's Education Recovery Commissioner had judged that some £15bn was needed to repair the damage done to the nation's pupils because of Covid. The Government's offer of £1.4bn falls far short and is inadequate. The Education Policy Institute have calculated that this amounts to £50 per pupil per year. This contrasts with £1,600 per pupil in the USA and £2,500 per pupil in the Netherlands. There are no quick or cheap fixes if we are to build back better from the pandemic and have an education system that supports high standards and strong mental health for everyone.

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32 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

Councillor Lewis introduced a report regarding the review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries, which asked Council to consider the method of responding to the Boundary Commission for England's consultation on its initial proposals for England's Review of Parliamentary Constituencies. Three options were set out in the report.

Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Brookes, proposed:

"That Option b) be approved, "to make a written response as a Council on the administrative issues that arise for delivering elections on the proposed boundaries"."

The proposition was clearly carried without debate.

Resolved:

That Option b) be approved, "to make a written response as a Council on the administrative issues that arise for delivering elections on the proposed boundaries".

33 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Head of Democratic Services reported the changes to committee memberships since the last Council meeting. These were simply for noting and were:

INDEPENDENT GROUP

Councillor Cleet replacing Councillor Goodwin on the Personnel Committee.

MBI GROUP

Councillor Geoff Knight named as a substitute member of the Personnel Committee

Councillor Dennison replacing Councillor Heath on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Geoff Knight named as a substitute member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors Heath and Matthews removed as named substitutes on the Budget and Performance Panel and Councillor Geoff Knight added as a named substitute.

Councillor Geoff Knight reported that Councillor Anderton would be added as a named substitute on Budget and Performance Panel.

34 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

The Mayor advised that two questions had been received by the Chief Executive in

accordance with Council Procedure Rules. Both questions were from Councillor Hartley to Councillor Matthews, as follows:

Congratulations on being appointed to the Cabinet with responsibility for the Housing portfolio. I hope that you will be as successful in the role as your predecessor was in a Labour led Council. There are just under 2 years left in this administration. During that time how many council houses do you expect Lancaster City Council to build?

Crucially, for those residents in the district looking for somewhere decent to live, how do you plan to increase that number?

Councillor Matthews addressed both questions in her reply:

The Council's priorities for housing are clearly set out in the Homes Strategy and Action plan which was agreed in Oct 2020

The Homes Strategy 2020-2025 contains 13 main sections setting both the strategic context of housing in relation to the council's re-affirmed ambitions and national policy changes.

The Homes Strategy seeks to make direct links with the council's re-affirmed priorities recognising that housing has a critical role in helping the council achieve its vision and priorities by making sure there is a sufficient supply of good quality housing to meet the needs and requirements of our diverse communities. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is fundamental to this, but unlike the previous Housing Strategy 2012-17 where the council was primarily engaged through its enabling role, the new Homes Strategy puts the council at the heart of delivering new housing and regeneration priorities.

Throughout this Homes Strategy we will be directly focussing on:

- Development at Canal Quarter with the potential to develop between 100 and 200 new homes of mixed tenure.
- The regeneration of Mainway estate. Consultation is currently underway with tenants, residents and stakeholder to formulate exciting new plans to comprehensively improve the existing estate.
- Morecambe Property Acquisitions – to increase the supply of good quality well managed homes with a focus on Morecambe's West End. We have recently moved forward with this through the incorporation of Morehomes for the Bay.
- Extra Care Housing – working with Lancashire County Council to develop new extra care schemes in Lancaster district by 2025 which will increase the housing choices available to the district's ageing population. The council is currently exploring the delivery of its own new build extra care facility on a site in North Lancaster.
- The Homes Strategy also identifies Ridge Square as a potential regeneration priority, subject to further consultation being undertaken and an options appraisal to identify the full costs and delivery options; and
- The refurbishment of Mellishaw Caravan Park

To ensure progress is made an action plan accompanies the draft Homes Strategy which sets out the required actions necessary to bring it to fruition and expected resource implications.

Councillor Hartley thanked Councillor Matthews for her reply and, by way of a supplementary question he asked:

I note that there has been retro-fitting on Mount Avenue. Can I ask how many of our existing council houses are going to be retro-fitted in the near future to the same standard as Mount Avenue?

Councillor Matthews agreed to reply to the question in writing.

35 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of three meetings held on 2 and 23 March and 14 April 2021.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

Mayor

(The meeting finished at 9.00 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,
please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - email dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk**

Councillor Caroline Jackson – Leader

- Principal Spokesperson
- Lead on Establishment & Achievement of Council Priorities & Principles
- Human Resources
- Fair Work Charter - good jobs & fair pay
- Communications

Councillor Dave Brookes**Environmental Services**

- Waste and Recycling
- Parks and Green Spaces
- Commons, Reserves, Open Spaces
- Water including Rivers and Coast
- Nature Conservation
- Biodiversity
- Street Cleansing
- Environmental Health & Enforcement
- Emergency Response, Community Resilience & Recovery

Councillor Gina Dowding**Planning and Place Making**

- Active Transport & Modal Shift Air Quality
- Planning including Local Plan
- Conservation & Urban Design
- Allotments, Food Production & Food Waste
- Council-owned Community Facilities
- Development and Building Control
- Compulsory Purchase
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Transport Policy and Parking

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox**Sustainable Economic Prosperity**

- Sustainable Business and Innovation Support
- Asset and Property Management
- Green Jobs & Skills
- Digital Strategy
- Community Wealth Building - Local Supply Chains

Councillor Tricia Heath**Economic Recovery**

- Business Recovery
- Business Development in Morecambe
- Tourism & Marketing

Councillor Kevin Frea – Deputy Leader**Climate Action**

- Community Action
- Climate Partnerships
- Energy
- Rural Communities & AONB
- Climate Change Resilience

Councillor Dr Erica Lewis**Corporate Services**

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Plan 2030 Portfolio Support Monitoring District Plan
- Legal Services
- Democratic Services (Democratic Support, Civic, Mayoral & Elections)
- Customer and Advice Services
- Governance
- Flooding/Flood Mitigation
- ICT
- Facilities Management

Councillor Cary Matthews**Housing**

- Council Housing
- Homelessness
- Private Sector Housing
- Social Housing
- Caravan Sites
- Traveller Sites
- Refugee Housing
- Household Support and Resilience
- Community Engagement & Development with support from a Lead Member

Councillor Sandra Thornberry**Arts, Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing**

- Arts, Culture, Festivals and Events
- Museums
- Visitor Information Centres
- Sport and Leisure
- Community Health & Wellbeing
- Equalities & Social Justice Initiatives including age; disability; race; religion or belief; sex, gender or gender identity

Councillor Anne Whitehead**Finance and Resources**

- Strategic Control of Financial Resources
- Treasury Management
- Procurement and Fair Trade
- Financial Services/Audit
- Revenues & Benefits

All portfolio holders will work to corporate priorities: increase action on the climate emergency, build community wealth and to increase community engagement & power. Cabinet members will work co-operatively work across aligned portfolios in order to manage cross-over areas, increase effectiveness and provide back up in case of sickness or absence. The monitoring of portfolio areas and overall cabinet progress will be through our Sustainable Development Goals.