

**BUDGET AND  
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**6.00 P.M.**

**31ST JANUARY 2024**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Ross Hunter (Chair), Dave Brookes (substitute for Hamish Mills), Keith Budden, Chris Hanna, Sally Maddocks, Sophie Maddocks, Sue Penney and James Sommerville

Also in Attendance:-

Cabinet Members Councillors Joanne Ainscough, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Caroline Jackson and Nick Wilkinson

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Martin Bottoms and Hamish Mills and Cabinet Members Phil Black, Catherine Potter and Jean Parr

NB: following the publication of the agenda notification was given of a change of membership to the Panel. Councillor Paul Tynan was replaced on the Panel by Councillor Sally Maddocks.

Officers in attendance:

Paul Thompson  
Stephen Metcalfe

Chief Officer - Resources and Section 151 Officer  
Principal Democratic Support Officer

**22 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were approved as a correct record.

**23 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

**24 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were made at this point.

**25 BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance and Resources, presented the City Council's Budget and Policy Framework Proposals.

The presentation contained details regarding:

- Public Finances.
- Change in core spending power between 2010-11 and 2023-24, England.

- 2024/25 General Fund Budget (Draft).
- Provisional Settlement allocations for Lancaster City Council 2024-25 vs 23-24.
- 2024/25 General Fund Budget (Draft).
  - Balanced without significant changes to service provision.
  - Summary of budget changes.
  - Our Expenditure, Income and Core Funding.
  - Budget Pressures and Key Assumptions.
  - Business Rates.
  - Reserves.
  - Council Tax – Increase 2.00% agreed at full Council.
  - Council Tax – Lancashire Comparison.
  - Council Services – excludes grant funding to external bodies.
  - General Fund – Capital Programme.
  - Fit for the Future. The next stage of the budgeting process.
  - General Fund Budget – What Do We Need To Do and How Are We Going To Do It.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox then responded to questions. Other Cabinet Members and City Council's officers also assisted with responses to queries.

Issues raised by the Panel were Business Rates income and Heysham Power Station, The Platform, Car parking charges, homelessness and temporary accommodation, Section 21 evictions, new homes bonus, Possible future charges for fly tipping and the forthcoming review of a Fly Tipping Strategy.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That Councillor Hamilton-Cox be thanked for his presentation to the Panel.

**26 LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY - BUDGET CONSULTATION 2024/25**

The Vice-Chair advised the Panel that Lancashire Combined Fire Authority had submitted a consultation paper on the Fire Authority's Budget Consultation 2024/25 for comment. There were no representatives at the meeting to present the budget consultation paper.

There were no comments on the report and no questions were raised.

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**27 LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - BUDGET CONSULTATION**

The Chair advised the Panel that Lancashire County Council had submitted its budget proposals for consultation. There were no representatives at the meeting to present the budget proposals.

It was moved by Councillor Sophie Maddocks, seconded by Councillor Sue Penney and resolved as follows.

**Resolved:**

The Budget and Performance Panel resolves as follows:

- (1) That it is disappointing that a representative from Lancashire County Council is not present at the meeting to answer questions regarding how the County Council has prioritised the savings that are proposed, to listen to the thoughts and concerns of the Panel and to respond to queries made at the meeting regarding the impacts of the proposals on this district.
- (2) That Lancashire County Council be requested to consider the Budget and Performance Panel's response to the proposed budget for 2024/25, set out below.

**GET005** - We are proposing a saving of £150k in the cost of clearing vegetation from walking and cycling routes across Lancashire through the implementation of more effective and efficient working practices.

**Budget and Performance Panel response:**

The Panel requested clarification regarding this proposal.

City Councillors receive plenty of adverse feedback on the state of footpaths and cycleways and are worried that 'efficiency gains' will, as usual, actually simply mean a reduced service.

**GET009** - A saving of £239k is proposed through the withdrawal of the £1 concessionary travel fare option for those with a disabled person's NoWcard, English National Concessionary travel pass, who travel by bus before 9.30 Monday to Friday.

**Budget and Performance Panel response:**

The Panel was concerned that the report does not consider the impact on disabled residents and would seem to discriminate against disabled people who are working and doubles the costs.

**GET011** - A saving of £6.3m is proposed by reducing the cost of treating collected food waste compared to existing waste disposal methods. This will be done through the installation and modification of facilities at Farington Waste Recovery Park. The change will also have the benefit of producing electricity which can be used to offset energy costs. This proposal is the subject of a more detailed report on this agenda.

**Budget and Performance Panel response:**

As the City Council will be incurring increased costs in the collection of food waste the Panel wishes to see some of the County Council's cost savings being passed to the City Council to help with the cost of collection of food waste in this district.

**GET019** – Introduce pay and display parking machines at Lancaster Park and Ride. This will require an initial investment to cover the cost of installation (£60k) but will save the authority an estimated £10k each year.

**Budget and Performance Panel response:**

The Panel do not want to see the introduction of park and ride pay and display parking costs as this will have a significant impact on sustainable transport in the district.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.46 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Support - email [sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk)**