

## PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 19 July 2023, when the following Members were present:-

Roger Dennison (Mayor)

Suhir Abuhajar

Catherine Armistead

Louise Belcher

Phillip Black

Dave Brookes

Ruth Colbridge

Gina Dowding

Andrew Gardiner

Erin Hall

Chris Hanna

Prof Chris Harris

Colin Hartley

Caroline Jackson

John Livermore

Sophie Maddocks

Shelagh McGregor

Hamish Mills

Jean Parr

Sue Penney

Joyce Pritchard

Sam Riches

Paul Stubbins

Sue Tyldesley

David Whitaker

Nick Wilkinson

Martin Bottoms (Deputy Mayor)

Joanne Ainscough

Mandy Bannon

Matthew Black

Phil Bradley

Keith Budden

Brett Cooper

Tom Fish

Alan Greenwell

Tim Hamilton-Cox

John Hanson

Paul Hart

Ross Hunter

Peter Jackson

Sally Maddocks

Sarah McGowan

Abi Mills

Paul Newton

Margaret Pattison

Catherine Potter

Robert Redfern

Grace Russell

Sandra Thornberry

Paul Tynan

John Wild

Jason Wood

**39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Blaikie, Cleet, Cozler, Gardner (Paul), Gawith, Knight, Lenox, Punshon and Sommerville.

**40 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**42 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reminded Councillors that tickets were still on sale for his first fundraiser, a quiz taking place on Friday 28th of July starting at 7 o'clock in Lancaster Town Hall. Teams of up to five were invited to join. Tickets costing £4 for each participant were available from the Mayor or his office.

**43 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11**

The Mayor advised that no questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11.

**44 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

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

**45 LEADER'S REPORT**

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

***Resolved:***

That the report be noted.

**46 LANCASTER CANAL QUARTER MASTERPLAN**

Councillor Wilkinson presented a report referred from Cabinet asking Council to approve and adopt the Masterplan document for the Canal Quarter.

After responding to questions from Members, Councillor Wilkinson proposed the recommendation in the report:

"That the Canal Quarter Masterplan be approved and adopted into the council's Corporate Policy Framework." Councillor Hamilton-Cox seconded the proposition.

There was a short debate before a vote was taken. The motion was clearly carried.

**Resolved:**

That the Canal Quarter Masterplan be approved and adopted into the council's Corporate Policy Framework

**47 MOTION ON DIVERSITY**

Councillor Parr and Councillor Ainscough had submitted the following motion having given the required notice to the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15:-

*"This Council notes:*

- Councillors represent their community and it is important that they reflect the diversity within their communities, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- The work of the Cooperative Party in developing a Declaration for councils aimed at increasing diversity in local government.

*This Council believes:*

- Diversity in representation makes for good decision making.

*This Council resolves:*

- To adopt The Co-operative Party's Diverse Councils Declaration (below) to increase diversity in our local government:

**The Co-operative Party's Diverse Councils Declaration**

This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. We agree to:

1. Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy.
2. Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.
3. Set out a local Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the next local elections.  
Including:
  - Appoint Diversity Ambassadors for each political group on the council to work with each other and local party associations to encourage recruitment of candidates from under-represented groups.
  - Encourage and enable people from under-represented groups to stand for office through the provision of activities such as mentoring and shadowing programmes and information and learning events for people interested in standing as official candidates.
  - Proactive engagement and involvement with local community groups and partner organisations supporting and representing under-represented groups
  - Ensure that all members and candidates complete a candidates' and councillors' survey distributed at election time.
  - Set ambitious targets for candidates from under-represented groups at the next

local elections

4. Work towards the standards for member support and development as set out in the LGA Councillor Development Charter and/or Charter Plus.
5. Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for councillors by:
  - providing access to counselling services for all councillors having regard for the safety and wellbeing of councillors whenever they are performing their role as councillors.
  - taking a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment of members including through social networks.
6. Provide flexibility in council business by:
  - regularly reviewing and staggering meeting times
  - encouraging and supporting remote attendance at meetings
  - agreeing recess periods to support councillors with caring or work commitments.
7. Ensure that all members take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.
8. Ensure that the council adopts a parental leave policy setting out members' entitlement to maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and relevant allowances.
9. Ensure that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high profile, high influence roles."

An officer briefing note had been drafted to accompany the motion. The note made clear that the motion was wide ranging and would have resourcing implications. Those would need to be quantified fully and brought back to Council. To do this, Officers recommended referral to Council Business Committee to allow that Committee, supported by officers, to determine the resource implications and report the findings back to Council.

In view of the officer briefing note, Councillor Parr asked to make an alteration to the motion she had submitted. She asked to add a bullet point to 'this council resolves' to read "That Cooperative Councillors will liaise with the Chief Officer, People and Policy, to bring forward more in-depth proposals for action to Council Business Committee in October."

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.7 the Mayor took a vote on whether or not to permit the alteration to the motion. A clear majority of Councillors voted in favour of allowing the alteration.

Councillor Parr then proposed the altered motion, seconded by Councillor Ainscough, and responded to many questions from other Councillors.

After all the questions had been dealt with, an amendment to the motion from the Green group was moved. The amendment, which had been submitted before the start of the meeting, was put forward by Councillor Dowding, seconded by Councillor Abi Mills. It was to replace all the wording of the substantive motion with the following text:.

"This Council notes:

- Councillors represent their community and it is important that they reflect the diversity within their communities, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- The work of the Cooperative Party in developing a Declaration for councils aimed at increasing diversity in local government.

This Council believes:

- Diversity in representation makes for good decision making.
  - Political groups on the council should make every effort to ensure that their elected members represent the communities they serve

This Council resolves:

- To demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, by promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.
- To appoint a Diversity Champion to be elected by Full Council in September. (The Diversity Champion - like other champions roles in the Council - will among other things work to highlight and promote good practice that has been adopted in other councils"

With the agreement of the meeting and her seconder, Councillor Parr accepted this as a friendly amendment. The wording of the Green amendment above then became the substantive motion.

There was a lengthy discussion on the motion. At the conclusion of the debate a vote was taken. The motion was clearly carried.

***Resolved:-***

This Council notes:

- Councillors represent their community and it is important that they reflect the diversity within their communities, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).
- The work of the Cooperative Party in developing a Declaration for councils aimed at increasing diversity in local government.

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This Council resolves:

- To demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, by promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.
- To appoint a Diversity Champion to be elected by Full Council in September. (The Diversity Champion - like other champions roles in the Council - will among other things work to highlight and promote good practice that has been adopted in other councils.)

#### **48 CATON-WITH-LITLEDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN - ADOPTION (MAKING) OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Council considered a report of the Chief Officer, Planning and Climate Change regarding the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan – Adoption (Making) of the Neighbourhood Plan. The report requested that Council formally “make” the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan with immediate effect, with the consequence that it would become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

Councillor Parr presented the report. She responded to a question from Councillor Cooper before proposing:

“That Lancaster City Council, under section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, formally make the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan with immediate effect, with the consequence that it becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.”

Councillor Pritchard seconded the proposal.

There was no debate. A vote was taken and the motion was clearly carried.

#### ***Resolved:***

That Lancaster City Council, under section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, formally make the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan with immediate effect, with the consequence that it becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

#### **49 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - RURAL SERVICES NETWORK**

The Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections had submitted a report regarding an appointment to an outside body, the Rural Services Network. The Network had asked for a Member and a substitute to be put forward and had expressed a preference for Councillors representing Rural wards.

Councillor Wood, seconded by Councillor Phil Black, proposed Recommendations (1) and (3) as set out in the report, with the basis of appointment to the Rural Services Network be by nomination and voting at Council.

The Mayor then asked for nominations. Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Dowding nominated Councillor Tynan.

There were no further nominations and the Mayor declared Councillor Tynan appointed to the Rural Services Network.

The Mayor then asked for nominations for a substitute Member. Councillor Peter Jackson nominated Councillor Greenwell. Councillor Dowding seconded the nomination. There

were no further nominations, therefore Councillor Greenwell was appointed substitute member of the Rural Services Network.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the basis of appointment to the Rural Services Network be by nomination and voting at Council.
- (2) That Councillor Tynan be appointed to the Rural Services Network, with Councillor Greenwell as substitute.

**50 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

No appointments or changes were reported.

**51 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12**

The Mayor advised that one question had been received by the Chief Executive in accordance with Council Procedure Rules. The question was from Councillor Wild to Councillor Stubbins, as the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Councillor Wild's question was:

*"The last accounts to be signed off were the 2018/19 accounts. The report of the Chief Finance Officer dated 24th May states that the only significant matters that remain outstanding are the objection from a local Council ratepayer regarding note 42: Contingent Liabilities. What items in note 42 of the 2019/20 accounts does the objection relate to?"*

Councillor Stubbins responded:

"The item in note 42 of the accounts related to the contingent liability identified as the 'Luneside East Regeneration Scheme'. This matter is currently 'live' with the external auditor and pursuant to schedule 11 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 it is not appropriate for further information to be given on the grounds that it may prejudice the effective performance of the external auditor's statutory functions."

Councillor Stubbins went on to provide information about the percentage of local authority accounts that were still not signed off (10% of Councils for 2019/20 and 27% for 2021/22) showing there are fundamental issues, some of which were related to external audit, some more technical.

Councillor Wild asked a supplementary question:

*"What is the taxpayer objecting to?"*

Councillor Stubbins referred Councillor Wild to the answer he had just given.

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Mayor

(The meeting finished at 8.00 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,**

**please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - email [dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk)**