



LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 24 July 2024 - 6.00

p.m.

Morecambe Town Hall

Lancaster City Council welcomes members of the public to attend meetings. However, space in the public gallery is limited to 30 seats due to Fire Regulations. The seats are allocated on a first come, first served basis and no standing is permitted. Meetings are livestreamed please click [HERE](#) to watch using MS Teams. Please contact Democratic Support via email democracy@lancaster.gov.uk if you wish to register to speak or ask a question at this meeting. The deadline to register is 12pm on Friday 19 July.

Mark Davies,
Chief Executive,
Town Hall,
Dalton Square,
LANCASTER,
LA1 1PJ



LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Sir/Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Lancaster City Council to be held in the Town Hall, Morecambe on Wednesday, 24 July 2024 commencing at 6.00 p.m. for the following purposes:

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **MINUTES**

To receive as a correct record the Minutes of the Meetings of the City Council held on 10 May and 13 May, 2024 (previously circulated).

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations by Councillors of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Councillors are reminded that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Whilst not a legal requirement, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 and in the interests of clarity and transparency, Councillors should declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, at this point in the meeting.

In accordance with Part B Section 2 of the Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to declare the existence and nature of any other interests as defined in paragraphs 8(1) or 9(2) of the Code of Conduct.

4. **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

5. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements which may be submitted by the Mayor or Chief Executive.

6. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11**

To receive questions in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rules 11.1 and 11.3 which require members of the public to give at least 3 days' notice in writing of questions to a Member of Cabinet or Committee Chairman.

7. **PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES**

To receive any petitions and/or addresses from members of the public which have been notified to the Chief Executive in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

8. **LEADER'S REPORT** (Pages 5 - 16)

To receive the Cabinet Leader's report on proceedings since the last meeting of Council.

OTHER BUSINESS

9. **CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION; ROLE OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY MAYOR** (Pages 17 - 20)

Report of the Monitoring Officer. (*Report published 17 July 2024.*)

10. **TEMPORARY CHANGE TO THE EXECUTIVE SCHEME OF DELEGATION** (Pages 21 - 22)

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE CHAIR** (Pages 23 - 24)

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

12. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBERS** (Pages 25 - 27)

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

13. **ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS** (Pages 28 - 32)

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

14. **APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**


Group Administrators to report any changes to Committee Membership.

15. **QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12**

To receive questions in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rules 12.2 and 12.4 which require a Member to give at least 3 working days' notice, in writing, of the question to the Chief Executive.

16. **MINUTES OF CABINET** (Pages 33 - 39)

To receive the Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet held 4 June 2024.



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Chief Executive



Leader's Report

24 July 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Cabinet

1.1 Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held 4 June later in this agenda.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently.

2.1 No urgent Cabinet decisions have been taken since the last Leader's Report.

3.0 Leader's Comments

Due to the snap General Election, there was no Full Council meeting held in June 2024, and so dear reader, I hope you are sitting comfortably, as this promises to be a lengthy report! Thanks go to several officers who supplied me with key updates in their service areas which will be incorporated into this report throughout.

Before I begin I would like to offer my best wishes to the Mayor, Cllr Abi Mills, who has recently announced that she is receiving treatment for breast cancer. I'm sure you will all share my hopes for her speedy and full recovery. Abi's son, Cllr Hamish Mills, is the Deputy Mayor and will be Chairing full council in

her place. I trust members will be suitably well behaved in meetings as Hamish steps into that role temporarily! I also send my best wishes to the Conservative group leader, Cllr Andrew Gardner who has also suffered some ill health recently. I hope to have him back in the council chamber – and making my life more difficult - as soon as possible. Get well soon!

3.1 Elections & Eden

Firstly, I'd like to thank council officers and staff who have put in weeks of hard work to meet the challenge of a snap General Election. Following the General Election of 4th July we have seen a change of Government nationally and the re-election of Cat Smith MP in Lancaster and Wyre. In Morecambe and Lunesdale David Morris has been succeeded by the newly elected Lizzi Collinge MP. I'd like to congratulate both of our district's MP's on their success at the ballot box and look forward to collaborating with them on a range of issues for the benefit of residents in our district. We thank David for his 14 years service as an MP and wish him, his wife Emma and their family, all the best in their future endeavours.

Lizzi has already found time to meet with myself and the Chief Executive to discuss a number of pressing issues. Our wide-ranging discussions touched upon issues such as housing, local government funding, renewable energy generation, AirB&B and holiday lets, devolution in Lancashire, cross boarder working, health partnerships, the Heysham nuclear power stations, other anchor institutions, public transport and more! However, at the top of our mutual agenda was Eden Project Morecambe, for which Lancaster City Council is the accountable body. I offered Lizzi an initial briefing of progress toward delivery and information on a number of key milestones that have been achieved in recent weeks. I was able to share with her that Lancaster City Council and Eden are currently working on a revised Full Business Case (FBC) and details of delivery timescales to submit in to Government by the end of July 2024. We are also now in contract with Eden with regard to the first £2.5M of Levelling Up Funds and Eden are currently procuring professional services for the design team to enable work to progress at pace. The next community conversation, which will be an in-person event, is to be held on 6th August with further firm dates and details to follow. Negotiations also continue with Eden with regard to the transport and parking solutions to ensure that both Eden and town centre are well served without detriment. I have undertaken to facilitate more in-depth briefings for Lizzi and will facilitate introductions to key individuals and partners associated with Eden moving forward.

The unexpected General Election prevented the previous Government from releasing the full £5m of early draw-down funding which had been agreed. However, the City Council was able to take steps necessary to facilitate the release of £2.5m of early draw-down funding despite the procedural frustrations of the pre-election period. Whilst I am delighted that Eden Morecambe now has access to £2.5m of cash in the bank, I remain committed to securing the remaining £2.5m promised, to ensure the continued smooth delivery of the project in terms of liquidity in these vital early procurement stages. I have

written to Lizzi as Morecambe's new MP to request her assistance in engaging with the civil service to help achieve this ambition for our district.

I have also written to both Lizzi and Cat to share the District Councils Network (DCN) prospectus. This details ways in which District Councils and the Government can work together to bring forward meaningful change to build many more homes and drive down homelessness, reduce pressure on the NHS and improve public health, deliver jobs and sustainable inclusive growth, cut carbon emissions, tackle fuel poverty and grow the green economy and to ensure investment transforms local places. The full prospectus can be viewed online here: <https://www.districtcouncils.info/wp-content/uploads/DCN-Prospectus-General-Election-2024-FINAL.pdf>

I would also like to note the University Ward by-election, which was also contested on 4th July. Labour's Erin Hall completed her studies in sociology and accepted a trainee teacher position outside the district, creating the ward vacancy. (If she's half as good a teacher as she was a councillor and community advocate then her students are very lucky to have her indeed!) Congratulations go to her successor, Maria Deery of the Green Party – I offer a warm welcome to you as our district's newest Councillor.

3.2 Lancaster City Parking

The consultation on the draft Parking Strategy for Lancaster City Centre has recently closed. This was supplemented by three workshops held with the Grand, The Chamber of Commerce and Lancaster BID. Officers are currently working through the responses and the comments received at the workshops. There are certainly a lot of issues for us to resolve to address the concerns raised and we have now launched a Project Board to look at actions. The High Street has been under incredible pressure for many years, and we recognise the sensitivity local businesses have when proposed changes to the availability and location of parking come forward. We also recognise that parking revenues are a major source of income for our council, especially important at a time of local government funding crisis. As we review the consultation response, we are committed to identifying the right solutions to both allow us to maintain the necessary quantity of parking in the right locations, but also allow us to achieve meaningful and much needed regeneration in the Canal Quarter. Discussions about adaptation to existing Council land holdings to boost parking availability are ongoing, and several members of the Cabinet are advocating for plans to bring forward a multi-storey car park at the northern end of the gyratory.

3.3 Mainway & Skerton High

This month has seen the establishment of a new cross-council governance structure to support the direction and progress of the regeneration of the Mainway council housing estate and development of new housing on the former Skerton High School site. The school was demolished earlier this year following a successful Brown Field Land Release Fund bid. Following the recent planning application submission for these new homes and now with a

focus on financial and development deliverability, it is the right time to bring together a core Programme Board. This will have regular oversight of the project, resources and risks, whilst also assisting with problem solving and ensuring the voices of the community affected are heard. The first meeting of the Programme Board has taken place, and my thanks go to the various representatives across the political parties as well as officers for their commitment to attending and working towards the future success of the project. A smaller sponsor group for the project will meet quarterly starting after the summer break. An audit process is also being commissioned which will account for the progress made toward delivering regeneration on Mainway over several years. This is another welcome step in good governance for the project and will help put us on good footing as we look toward other future council led social housing developments in our district.

More broadly I would like to remind members of the Housing and Property Annual Report circulated to all members via email on Weds 12th June by Joanne Wilkinson. This comprehensive document is worth absorbing and provides a significant insight into ongoing works and challenges faced in this service area.

3.4 Allotments

Allotments across the district are highly valued by the people that use them. As well as providing a space to grow fruit and vegetables, they bring benefits far beyond this. They improve mental and physical health, offer access to a green space and nature, are places to be with or around others as well as be in your own space. They are also rich habitats that support wildlife e.g. plants, insects, birds, and small mammals. This eight-month project looked at the present provision of allotments in Lancaster District and their characteristics (e.g size and facilities), how they are used and run, their contribution to biodiversity, their climate resilience, the demand for allotments, other community-led food growing models in the District, future visions for allotments and support needs. The report details a significant number of recommendations for improvements in areas such as expanded provision, process and administration, finance, facilities, communication, and also highlights responsibilities for both the local authority and for individual allotments. The full report can be read here:

<https://foodfutures.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/LD-Allotment-Review-2024-FINAL-DIGITAL.pdf>

3.5 Frontierland

The consultation on objectives for the Frontierland site has been concluded and the Project Board have reviewed the responses which were generally in agreement on the 11 objectives identified for the site. The project board has also been expanded to include representatives from external partners such as the local business community, culture sector and Morecambe Town Council. The next steps are that Lancaster City Council will seek a development partner for the site by way of competitive dialogue. Given the progress with Eden and that we are entering stages of contracts we are keen to engage the developer

market and are currently working on holding an event for the development industry after the Summer holiday period. We know what an exciting opportunity this is for our district, and can't wait to show off all that Morecambe has to offer to potential partners who can bring forward the kind of development that meets all of our objectives for the site.

3.6 Climate, Nature and Net Zero

The Council **STILL** awaits the Planning Inspector's final report on the Climate Emergency Local Plan Review (CELPR). Meanwhile the CELPR was lauded at the recent Local Government Chronicle Awards as part of a "forward-thinking" approach towards net zero. The judges recognised Lancaster's *"unparalleled tenacity and determination in pushing boundaries and leading the charge on a national scale. Their commitment to addressing climate adaptation and mitigation through revised planning policies has set a shining example for other local authorities to emulate."* The judges said this *"impactful initiative showcases how planning authorities like Lancaster City Council can create lasting, sustainable change for local communities, especially for the most vulnerable"*.

At the time of writing this report the Local Plan Review Group is due to consider a report setting out the next stage of the full Local Plan Review. The scoping consultation concluded in May, and a formal 'Issues and Opportunities' consultation will launch this summer. There are nine broad issues to consider, namely:

- Addressing the climate emergency;
- Nature recovery and biodiversity;
- Protected landscapes and townscapes;
- Transport and connectivity;
- Meeting our housing needs;
- Providing the right types of home;
- Design, healthy lifestyles and safe communities;
- Securing economic prosperity;
- Right infrastructure, right places.

The consultation will also include in-person public events. It represents a comprehensive opportunity for our residents and businesses to get involved with shaping their district. More details will be publicised shortly.

The Burrow Beck Solar Array proposal continues to progress and promises to help us meet our renewable energy generation aspirations, help us reduce our CO2 emissions and deliver a financial return to our budgets. Earlier this month Cabinet approved the financial support for the initial stages of the project, including the commissioning of detailed designs (at our first live-streamed Cabinet meeting!). A planning application will be brought forward before the autumn. Further consideration is being given to plans for a dual use for the site to also promote biodiversity net gain and capitalise on associated revenue opportunities.

The local planning authority are progressing several other projects, all of which align with the ambitions in the Council Plan. The Local Area Energy Plan, which aims to identify the most cost-effective pathway to net zero, is expected to be completed in the Autumn. Work on a Climate and Nature Strategy, which is intended to be an overarching plan for all the council's climate mitigation and adaptation workstreams, has recently commenced. And the Council has fulfilled its "first considerations" duty under the Environment Act 2021 with regard to setting out how it aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity across the district. A new biodiversity website 'hub' has been created which includes a Biodiversity Action Plan. This was approved by Cabinet in June.

We are also working with North West Employers Organisation to lead a NW climate change portfolio holder / officer group. The aim of this group is to develop joint plans to progress the move to net zero for our entire region. Working in this way allows us to tap into the capacity of Councils from Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside. The inaugural meeting was recently hosted by us in Lancaster Town Hall.

3.7 Local Economy

The vision, objectives and workplan to develop and deliver a new Digital Strategy have now been established. An Officer / Member sub-group meets regularly to review progress against a detailed delivery plan which includes co-creation with key stakeholders both internally and externally. It is anticipated that the final strategy will be available in quarter three. Work has also started on scoping an Economic Strategy for the District. A Project Board is being created and the next stage will commence baseline work to assess the District's current economy and look at holding workshops with key stakeholders to develop a vision, objectives and actions for the new strategy. There is an aim to get a draft Economic Strategy by the end of 2024 ready for consultation with adoption in 2025. My thanks go to Lancaster University who have offered to support the strategy development work in partnership with our officers and members.

Officers submitted the end of Year 2 UKSPF report to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on May 01st 2024. We have since received approval from government regarding the delivery of both our UKSPF and REPF programme. We have since received our Grant Determination letter and we will receive 100% of our UKSPF allocation for Year 3 in early June 2024. All funding is now committed to projects to achieve a balanced programme.

In May the Chief Officer for Sustainable Growth attended a national development event in Leeds, UK REIIF. Lancashire had a stand (which we participated on) and the County Council had prepared an investment prospectus for the county. This document highlighted potential development opportunities in our district including Frontierland, Heysham Gateway, Canal Quarter and the Health Innovation Campus. It also promoted Morecambe generally in anticipation of the 'Eden effect'. The prospectus is available here:

<https://investinlancashire.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Lancashire-Investment-Prospectus-2024-low-res.pdf>

3.8 Fit for the Future

Work to address the Council's structural financial deficit and ensure responsible fiscal management of the council by returning balanced budgets is ongoing. The Fit for the Future programme is the new phase for the existing OBR programme and is driven by the Council Plan 24-27. It consists of 14 projects to improve service delivery across the council, streamline and digitising processes where possible, and deliver savings. The projects are now underway and provide monthly update reports to the OBR Strategy and Coordination Group, and joint Cabinet / Leadership team meetings are held bi-monthly to review progress. The three digitalisation projects (Customer Services, HR Recruitment and Licensing) are further on than the other projects as these were started in late 2023, following a workpiece carried out by the consultancy PeopleToo. To date progress for the 14 projects is on track, with full plans and the expected outcomes and benefits of each project in the process of being created. The estimated savings for each project are to be determined by October 2024 to tie in with the budget setting process, although the savings may not be realised until after this date. Members will continue to be briefed on progress.

The consequences of more than a decade of budget cuts and chronic underfunding of district councils by the previous Government continues to manifest itself in new and problematic ways. In addition to the challenges we face in service provision and delivering our ambitions for residents, we also see the impact on the very fabric of the buildings we own. A complete stock condition survey of our built assets (Civic and Commercial) is nearly complete and the Cabinet should receive a full briefing on the outcomes in September. Early indications are that the full compliance, repair and maintenance liability for the entirety of the asset base will present an extraordinary cost pressure to the Council. Part of the work for the Fit for the Future Assets group is identifying urgent works, assessing the value (social and financial) of our holdings and looking at creating a wider strategy to meet this challenge. My hope is that in dealing with this challenge, we can identify solutions which not only meet the cost pressures but also allow us to take meaningful strides toward delivering on our other shared key aims and ambitions, as agreed by us all in our Council Plan. As ever, we don't have the luxury of only dealing with one challenge at a time!

The L50 licence plate, formerly associated with the Mayoral car, has now been sold after being marketed for many months.

3.9 Partnerships

Cabinet recently agreed to signing a memorandum of understanding to formalise the Lancaster District Strategic Partnership. The Lancaster District

Strategic Partnership has been established to spearhead the wider district's collective strategic ambitions. The overarching strategic priorities for the partnership will be: 1) Sustainability and the Climate Emergency, 2) the Economy, 3) Health and Wellbeing and 4) Communities. Agreed strategic priorities have alignment with the ambitions of the Council Plan. It is anticipated that the LDSP will add value to the council's ability to deliver strategic ambitions, by applying a partnership approach to delivery. The founding members are:

- Lancaster City Council
- Lancaster University
- University of Cumbria
- Lancaster and Morecambe College
- Lancaster District Chamber of Commerce
- University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay
- Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB
- Lancaster District CVS
- Lancaster Arts Partnership
- Lancashire County Council

A meeting of the Cabinet / Leadership teams of Lancaster City Council and Westmorland and Furness Council to agree Morecambe Bay focussed priorities we could work on jointly is upcoming. This meeting was scheduled for July but at W+F request has had to be postponed. We have also been leading on a district-council approach to complementing various health systems. Including plans to devolve some health to local footprints via the health and wellbeing board. In related news Lancashire and South Cumbria have bid for a WorkWell Partnership Programme (WWPP) Vanguard submitted by the ICB, with authorities, in January 2024 to the Joint Work and Health Unit (DWP and DHSC). It has been confirmed that the bid was successful, and that Lancashire and South Cumbria have been awarded £4.6m to provide the programme for 5000 people, including an area of focus in Lancaster & Morecambe. The WWPP vanguard aims to research and test approaches to the causes of, and provide specialised support to individuals to prevent, people leaving the labour market due to health conditions.

Work with the District Council Network has been undertaken to help ensure Government understands the value Districts add including recent national coverage of the challenges the new waste reforms create for Councils, from the perspective of District Councils and specifically Lancaster City Council. The Chief Executive penned an article about this which can be read here:

<https://www.circularonline.co.uk/opinions/simpler-recycling-uncertainty-how-local-authorities-preparing/> The DCN Annual General Meeting took place on 1st July.

The Local Government Association (LGA) general assembly was scheduled to take place in early July, however had to be moved to a virtual meeting due to the snap General Election. I attended both the virtual assembly and the Labour LGA meeting that immediately preceded it. I have also attended virtual meetings of both Key Cities and UK100.

Looking at partnerships in local government, in May I attended the Carnforth Town Council's annual meeting, 'the assembly'. I heard much about the way the Town Council is working for Carnforth and was impressed by the approach to delivering on a wide range of their priorities. We are currently planning a 'summit' event with Morecambe Town Council. With the intention of gaining an understanding of our joint priorities and then agreeing how we can best work together to add value to our communities. We are working with Lancashire County Council to develop options for a more joined up approach to waste collection / waste disposal that would help us respond to the funding challenges already faced and new waste reforms. This approach is informed by data and we have worked with County and the national organisation WRAP to develop a performance template that will allow comparison with other Districts and help us develop a range of options. We continue to work closely with County on key specific projects including Eden and on-street parking issue in our district. A scheduled meeting between the Leaders of Council's across Lancashire was postponed due to the snap General Election. The previous Government and the three upper tier authorities failed to take their devolution plans for Lancashire and the proposed Combined County Authority through parliament in the time they made available to themselves - something I note we collectively warned them might happen. Many Lancashire Leaders were critical of the plans in terms of funding and the scope of powers devolved and all will be keen to understand the incoming Government's view of devolution in our area.

3.10 Culture and Events

Through OBR – a new events team has been merged under one service including Ashton Hall, The Storey and The Platform. UKSPF funding has increased staffing capacity to work on new leads and income generation opportunities across the sites. The Team have worked tirelessly since the merger of teams and have secured bookings such as televised BBC New Comedy Awards, Comedian Nish Kumar and other large events including silent discos and beer festivals.

This May Lancaster once again hosted the Highest Point Festival, with headliners including Tom Odell, Busted, Cat Burns, Sam Ryder, Caity Baiser and an epic DJ set from Gok Wan. I attend a stakeholder reception at the festival and saw first-hand what great work has been done to bring it all together, and heard about the steps taken to ensure the sound disturbance and other inconveniences for nearby residents were being monitored and minimised. Members will be please to know that hosting the festival generates a positive contribution to our revenue budget too.

May also saw the colourful return of Festa Italia to Lancaster City Centre, with food, music, dance and decorations on display.

In June I attended PRIDE in Lancaster, joining the march with the queer community and local organisations which support us. I was pleased to see

officers and vehicles from Lancaster City Council join the parade, and welcome our continued backing of local PRIDE events. I was invited to give a speech and took the opportunity to speak about the importance of allyship, for the crucial role that non-queer voices have in challenging homophobia and transphobia, and in advocating for the rights and freedoms of the LGBT+ community.

In June we celebrated and commemorated the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. Events and beacon lighting ceremonies took place in Morecambe, Carnforth and Lancaster. I attended beacon lighting ceremonies at both Lancaster Castle with the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire, and at the Priory where the Mayor lit the beacon. I also attended a concert featuring the award-winning Morecambe Brass Band at the Priory, with a performance set list ingeniously themed around a narrative of the D-Day landings.

Armed Forces Day celebrations in Morecambe saw an impressive parachute display over the bay from the RAF Falcons. This was followed by a parade where the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire took the salute, and a Drumhead Service. I took the opportunity to view many of the displays and entertainments, enjoy the hospitality of the WI and was honoured to meet local D-Day veterans.

In July I attended an event at Lancaster and Morecambe College which celebrated their 200 year long history of continuous technical education – with a few changes of address and some rebranding along the way – traced back to the founding of the “Library and Mechanics’ Institute” in 1824. There was a plaque unveiled commemorating the opening of the building by the late Duke of Edinburgh, the presentation of artwork by Chas Jacobs and the ribbon cutting on ‘the MET’ by Professor Vanessa Toulmin.

In July we also saw both the concurrent return of both Dino Fest and the Bay Health Festivals to Lancaster. Together these events packed out the City Centre and Dalton Square. Congratulations to the teams at Lancaster BID and Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS for crafting such popular events, promoting visits to our high street and promoting healthier lifestyles.

I have also met with Neuro-Dropin to discuss their plans for new premises in the city, attended a Civic Dinner hosted by Lancaster University – with a focus on place-based partnership work, and visited the Parkinsons UK drop-in support and information event at Barton Grange Garden Centre.

3.11 Deputy

In June Cllr Jean Parr deputised for me in attending the "Humanity Cartoon's Exhibition" at Lancaster Library, organised by Time to Help UK Panel in partnership with Human Right Solidarity and Dialogue Society. The "Humanity Cartoons" refugee cartoon competition is focused on raising awareness and inspiring thought about the plight of refugees through the medium of cartoon art.

Cllr Joanne Aincough deputised for me in attending the D-Day celebration and beacon lighting events in Morecambe in June as I had already agreed to attend similar events on the same day in Lancaster.

Cllr Caroline Jackson deputised for me in attending the County's D-Day commemorative service at Blackburn Cathedral with the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire and the Dean of Blackburn.

In July Cllr Peter Jackson deputised for me at short notice for a meeting with 'Young Cities'. In Lancaster Young Cities will work with Escape2make, Lancaster City Council and members of Lancaster University's Imagination Lancaster team. It was a fruitful meeting emphasising the social justice and educational opportunities of enabling children and young people to have a meaningful say in the planning, design, development and stewardship of their neighbourhoods, towns and cities. It is likely that further work with Young Cities will fall within Cllr Jackson's portfolio responsibilities.

4.0 Decisions

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 9 July 2024:

Lancaster District Strategic Partnership' Memorandum of Understanding'
LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report
Burrow Beck Solar Project
Asset Consideration – Lancaster

No Officer Delegated Key Decisions have been taken since the last Leaders report.

ICMD 31	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Grant Award: Communities, Well-Being and Partnerships	Published on: 16.04.24 Taken by: Cllr Peter Jackson
ICMD 32	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), Grant Award: Climate Action	Published on: 16.04.24 Taken by: Cllr Gina Dowding
ICMD 33	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Grant Award: Visitor Economy, Community Wealth Building and Culture	Published on: 16.04.24 Taken by: Cllr Catherine Potter
ICMD 34	UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Grant Award: Regeneration, Skills and Digital Innovation	Published on: 18.04.24 Taken by: Cllr Nick Wilkinson
ICMD 35	UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Grant Award: Community and Place	Published on: 24.04.24 Taken by: Cllr Peter Jackson
ICMD 1	Disposal of Council Land	Published on: 03.06.24 Taken by: Cllr Phillip Black
ICMD 2	Virement of Capital Funding	Published on: 05.06.24 Taken by: Cllr Caroline Jackson

The following Individual Cabinet Member Decision has been taken since the last Leader's report.

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda of the meeting held on 9 July 2024.



Change to the Constitution: Role of an Assistant Deputy Mayor

24 July 2024

Report of the Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT
To ask Council to consider a change to the Constitution to create a new role of Assistant Deputy Mayor.
This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Council considers a change to the Constitution being proposed in this report, to create a role of Assistant Deputy Mayor.**
- (2) That, if Council is minded to create the role above, it appoints Councillor Riches to the position for the remainder of 2024/5.**

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Constitution currently allows the Mayor to select a Deputy to be appointed at Council. This year the Mayor, Councillor Abi Mills, selected Councillor Hamish Mills.
- 1.2 As Council is aware, the Mayor is currently unwell and undergoing treatment which may last some time. In these circumstances, a request has been made for more support for the Deputy Mayor, who will be called upon to attend many more civic events that would normally be necessary during an average Mayoral year.
- 1.3 This report sets out how that support might be offered by a change to the Constitution.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to create a new role in the Constitution, without remuneration, named an Assistant Deputy Mayor. This is not a role which would need to be appointed to every year, just in instances such as this, where a Mayor is likely

to be unavailable for a substantial period during their Mayoral year. The reason for this is that, whilst a Deputy Mayor is able to perform some duties, depending on their personal circumstances, they may have to turn events down. This is likely to disappoint organisations who have asked for the Mayor or Deputy to be in attendance. An Assistant Deputy Mayor would be able to cover those events. That would be the extent of the role, to attend civic events.

- 2.2 The Deputy Mayor would select the Assistant Deputy, and they would then be appointed by full Council. **Appendix A**, with tracked changes, shows the amendments necessary to parts of the Constitution to effect the change.
- 2.3 It is not proposed that an Assistant Deputy will be required to Chair Council in the event that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent. Rule 2 of the Council Procedure Rules will remain unchanged, Council will elect a person to Chair in that circumstance.
- 2.4 Councillor Hamish Mills has asked, if this request to change the Constitution is agreed, that Councillor Riches be appointed by Council to the role of Assistant Deputy Mayor.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Council is asked to consider this request to change the Constitution in the first instance. If Council does make the change, Members are asked to appoint the Councillor selected by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Riches.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing) None directly arising from this report.</p>	
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS None directly arising from this report.</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS None identified. The new role, if created, will not attract any allowance.</p>	
<p>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS Human Resources, Information Services, Property and Open Spaces: None</p>	
<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>	
<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Monitoring Officer has helped draft this report.</p>	
<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS None</p>	<p>Contact Officer: Debbie Chambers Telephone: 01524 582057 E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk</p>

Changes to the Constitution

Page 7, The Role of the Mayor

1.1 The Mayor is the first citizen of the City of Lancaster. The civic and ceremonial role of the Mayor is non-political. The Mayor serves for a one-year term of office. He/she has the following roles and functions (which in his/her absence shall be carried out by the Deputy Mayor, or in the case of (b) only, below, the Assistant Deputy Mayor). The Mayor will:

- (a) promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
- (b) promote the Council as a whole, acting as a focal point for the community, attending such civic and ceremonial functions and fulfilling such civic duties as the Council and he/she determine to be appropriate;
- (c) preside over meetings of the Council so that Council business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community, including deciding the order of business;
- (d) ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which Councillors who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold the Cabinet and Committee Chairs to account;
- (e) keep order at Council meetings and ensure that Councillor behaviour is of the highest standard and does not bring the Council into disrepute;
- (f) exercise a second or casting vote in the event of a tie;
- (g) uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and, subject to the advice and guidance of the Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer during Council meetings, interpret the Constitution as and when necessary;
- (h) when in debate or question time read the sense of the meeting and when in the Mayor's belief debate or questions already put shall have represented the views of the Council, the Mayor shall intervene to move to the next business under the Procedure Rules in **Part 3**; and
- (i) produce a review of the year report usually submitted to Council towards the end of the municipal year (normally at the April Council which precedes the Annual Council in May).

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1.2 The Deputy Mayor is selected by the Mayor and appointed by Council.

- 1.3 The Assistant Deputy Mayor, if required, is selected by the Deputy Mayor and appointed by Council.

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1 Functions of Full Council

1.1 The following functions are the responsibilities of the Council and will be discharged by Full Council (all Councillors meeting together) unless delegated to a Committee, Sub-Committee or an Officer. Non-executive functions may still be exercised by the Council even where delegated to a Committee, Sub-Committee, body or Officer elsewhere in this Constitution, subject to specific exceptions (for example Licensing Sub-Committee).

1.2 The Full Council is the body responsible for:

- (a) Electing the Mayor and appointing the Deputy Mayor;
- (b) Appointing the Assistant Deputy Mayor if required
- (c) Electing every two years the Leader of the Council

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2 RULE 1 - ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

In a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, the Annual Meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement of the outgoing Councillors. In any other year, the Annual Meeting will take place in May. The Annual Meeting will:

- (a) elect a person to preside if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council are not present;
- (b) elect the Mayor of the Council;
- (c) appoint the Deputy Mayor of the Council (and an Assistant Deputy Mayor should one be necessary)

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Part 6

Glossary of Terms

In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise demands, the following terms have the meaning assigned to them:

Assistant Deputy Mayor – appointed by Council, an Assistant Deputy Mayor may carry out civic duties if the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are both unavailable.

COUNCIL

Temporary Change to the Executive Scheme of Delegation

24 July 2024

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Council of a temporary change to the membership of Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That the report be noted.

1.0 Background

1.1 Rule 2 of the Cabinet Procedure Rules provides as follows:

“Delegation by the Leader

(a) At the annual meeting of the Council, the Leader will present to the Council the names of the people appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader (including the name of the Deputy Leader), and their portfolios.....”

Any changes to the Cabinet membership or portfolios are reported to Council. This report is to inform Council of a temporary change.

2.0 Cabinet Member for Climate Action

2.1 Councillor Gina Dowding, currently the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, will step down from that role from 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2024, with Councillor Stubbins taking up the role in her stead.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 Council is asked to note this temporary change of cabinet responsibilities.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None directly arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None directly arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified. This will not affect the amount of special responsibility allowance paid overall.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources, Information Services, Property and Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Telephone: 01524 582057

E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk

Ref:

COUNCIL**Appointment of a Committee Chair****24 July 2024****Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support
and Elections****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To appoint a Chair for the Audit Committee for the period from 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2024.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That Council appoints a Chair for the Audit Committee.

1.0 Background

1.1 Full Council is required to appoint the Chairs of Committees at its annual meeting. At that meeting in May 2024, Councillor Paul Stubbins was appointed Chair of the Audit Committee.

1.2 Elsewhere on the agenda, Members will see that the Leader has appointed Councillor Stubbins to Cabinet for a period of four months from 1 August 2024 to 30 November 2024, in place of Councillor Dowding.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 The Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee do not permit a Cabinet Member to Chair, stating: *The Chair and Vice Chair must not be a member of the Cabinet or an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*

2.2 Councillor Stubbins has stood down as the Chair of the Audit Committee in line with Constitutional requirements. With the Chair now vacant, Council is asked to appoint a Chair of the Audit Committee.

2.3 Current membership of the Committee who are eligible for nomination for Chair are: Councillors Colbridge, Hartley, Knight, Metcalfe-Riener and Whitaker.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 Council is asked to appoint to the Chair of Audit Committee.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p> <p>None directly arising from this report.</p>	
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>None directly arising from this report.</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>None identified. This will not affect the amount of special responsibility allowance paid overall.</p>	
<p>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>Human Resources, Information Services, Property and Open Spaces: None</p>	
<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>	
<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>	
<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Contact Officer: Debbie Chambers Telephone: 01524 582057 E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk Ref:</p>

COUNCIL**Appointment of
Independent Remuneration Panel Members****24 July 2024****Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support
and Elections****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To enable Council to make two appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel following a recent recruitment exercise to add to the robustness of the Panel which is currently at the minimum membership to be quorate.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Council appoints Mr George Krawiec and Miss Monica Law to its Independent Remuneration Panel.**

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 require the Council to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 1.2 An Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) must consist of at least three members, none of whom must be a member of the Council. The Panel is expected to review the Council's Councillor Allowances Scheme every year and carry out a thorough review in the year prior to elections. At the end of the review, the panel makes recommendations to the Council about the allowances to be paid to Members.
- 1.3 IRPs make recommendations about the level of basic allowance for Members; the level of Special Responsibility Allowances and to whom they should be paid and on whether dependants' carers' allowance, travel and subsistence allowances and co-optees' allowances should be paid and the level of those allowances. The Council must have regard to the recommendations of the Panel before making or amending a Councillor Allowances Scheme.

2.0 Quoracy of the Panel

- 2.1 In years past, the Council sought to have a Panel of up to seven members, with a quorum of three. For the last full review of the Allowances Scheme, undertaken during 2022/23, the panel numbers had dwindled to three; the member minimum required to be quorate. The review was completed by those three members and the new scheme was approved for adoption from May 2023. The current panel members have been very accommodating with their availability for meetings, however it is not ideal to have only the minimum number of panel members to be quorate, as there may be occasions in the future when one or more panel members are away on holiday or otherwise unavailable. In view of this Democratic Support advertised for up to two additional panel members in May 2024.
- 2.2 A recruitment exercise was undertaken with the vacancies advertised on the council website and social media accounts. Two applicants met individually with the Senior Manager Democratic Support and Elections on 11 June 2024. These in-person meetings were to discuss the role of the IRP and their applications. A short biography of both candidates is provided below.
- 2.3 Jerzy (George) Krawiec is a retired local authority Chief Executive and Solicitor with over 20 years' experience as a Chief Executive at three different authorities. Before that he was Deputy Town clerk at Lancaster City Council in the mid 1980's. He retired in 2008 and has recently moved into the area. He is now a Governor at 2 schools in Lancaster and Morecambe. Before moving here, he was an independent member of his County Police and Crime Panel and an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee of his then local District Council. He has significant knowledge of how Local Government works and understands both the varying workloads and pressures that being an elected member entails.
- 2.4 Miss Monical Law has direct experience of the work carried out by Independent Remuneration Panels. She currently serves on the IRP for both unitary authorities in Cumbria as the Chair of the Panel in Cumberland and a member of the panel in Westmorland and Furness and has been involved in the process of developing allowances schemes for Councillors at those newly formed authorities. Miss Law took up these positions in 2022 after retiring from a long career in Local Government in various positions with Liverpool City Council, latterly in Marketing and Promotions.
- 2.5 With their knowledge of local government and willingness to apply their skills to support Councils in the role of IRP member, both Mr Krawiec and Miss Law are considered to be eminently suited to the role and are recommended to Council for appointment.

3.0 Allowance

- 3.1 In July 2020, Council resolved:

That £1,500 per annum be allocated for remuneration for Independent Remuneration Panellists to be divided equally between serving panellists up to a cap of £300 each per annum.

- 3.2 £1,500pa still covers five Panel Members at a rate of £300 allowance every

year.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Council is recommended to appoint Mr George Krawiec and Miss Monica Law to its Independent Remuneration Panel to boost capacity for future reviews of its Councillor Allowances Scheme.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p> <p>None directly arising from this report.</p>	
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>The Panel is required to be appointed by the Council, although it is independent of the Council. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 part 4, section 20 paragraph 3, allows for Council's to pay an allowances to its IRP members stating that it "may pay the members of the panel such allowances or expenses as the authority or authorities for which it makes recommendations may determine."</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>In July 2020, Council resolved:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>That £1,500 per annum be allocated for remuneration for Independent Remuneration Panellists to be divided equally between serving panellists up to a cap of £300 each per annum.</i></p> <p>£1,500pa still covers five Panel Members at a rate of £300 allowance every year. In addition, expenses are payable for attending meetings, however meetings of the IRP have been remote since the pandemic. This is easier for the Panel Members who work and/or live in other areas of Lancashire.</p>	
<p>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>Human Resources, Information Services, Property and Open Spaces: None</p>	
<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>	
<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.</p>	
<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Contact Officer: Debbie Chambers Telephone: 01524 582057 E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk Ref:</p>



Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

24 July 2024

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of the calculations relating to the allocation of seats in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 following a change to the political composition of the Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and Part 4 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations, 1990, the City Council approves the calculations and allocation of seats set out in this report, including the adjustments set out in the table in 3.4 of the report.

1.0 Introduction.

- 1.1 There has been a change since the calculation was agreed at the Annual Council meeting on 13 May 2024, as a result of the resignation of Labour Councillor Erin Hall and the subsequent by-election.
- 1.2 The by-election for the University Ward of the City Council was held on 4 July 2024. Councillor Maria Deery was elected for the Green Party and joins the Green Group on the Council.

2.0 Change in Composition of the Council

- 2.1 The make-up of the Council is now:

Labour	23
Green and Independent Group	22
Liberal Democrats	7
Conservative	5
MBIs	3
Non-aligned Independent	1
	61

- 2.2 The table below shows the changes required across all 78 committee seats based upon the revised political composition of the Council.

3.0 Political Balance on Committees

3.1 If political balance was calculated separately on each committee the figure would be as set out below for each size of committee:-

3.2 15 Member Committee (Planning Regulatory)

Labour	$23/60 \times 15 = 5.7499$	(6)
Green	$22/60 \times 15 = 5.4999$	(5)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 15 = 1.7499$	(2)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 15 = 1.2499$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 15 = 0.7500$	(1)
	Total	(15)

10 Member Committee (Licensing Regulatory)*

Labour	$23/60 \times 10 = 3.8333$	(4)
Green	$22/60 \times 10 = 3.6666$	(4)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 10 = 1.1666$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 10 = 0.8333$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 10 = 0.5000$	(0)
	Total	(10)

**At the Annual Council meeting in May, the Green and MBI groups tied for a place on this committee.*

9 Member Committees x 2 (Overview and Scrutiny, Budget and Performance)*

Labour	$23/60 \times 9 = 3.4499$	(3)
Green	$22/60 \times 9 = 3.2999$	(3)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 9 = 1.0499$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 9 = 0.7499$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 9 = 0.4500$	(1)
	Total	(9)

*Figures rounded, with the last place going to the group with the largest residual (MBI)

7 Member Committees x 5 (Personnel, Audit, CBC, Appeals, Standards)*

Labour	$23/60 \times 7 = 2.6833$	(3)
Green	$22/60 \times 7 = 2.5666$	(2)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 7 = 0.8166$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 7 = 0.5833$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 7 = 0.3500$	(0)
	Total	(7)

*Figures rounded. However there are only seven seats on each committee so the group with the smallest residual (Green) is rounded down.

3.3 If all the Committees could be calculated individually, as shown above, the result for the 78 places would be as shown overleaf:

3.3 The figures above would give an overall total out of the 78 seats of:-

Labour	6+4+6+15	= 31
Green	5+4+6+10	= 25
Liberal Democrat	2+1+2+5	= 10
Conservative	1+1+2+5	= 9
MBI	1+0+2+0	= 3
TOTAL		<u>78</u>

- 3.4 However, the individual committee calculations are a guide only to the balanced composition of each committee. The calculation of the 78 committee places on all standing committees **must** be undertaken using rules A-E, set out in s. 15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Those rules are explained in **Appendix A** and the aggregate calculation is as shown on the table below under the column "July 2022". The necessary adjustments are shown in the highlighted right-hand column of that same table.

	May 2024	Actual	Rounded	July 2024	Actual	Rounded	Change
Labour	24/60x78	31.2000	31	23/60x78	29.8999	30	-1
Green	21/60x78	27.3000	27	22/60x78	28.5999	29	+2
Lib Dem	7/60x78	9.0999	9	7/60x78	9.0999	9	-
Conservative	5/60x78	6.4999	7*	5/60x78	6.4999	6	-1
MBI	3/60x78	3.9000	4	3/60x78	3.9000	4	-
	TOTAL		78	TOTAL		78	

**It should be noted that in May 2024 the Conservative Group, as the group with the largest residual, was rounded up from 6 seats overall, to 7 seats overall.*

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Members are requested to agree the new calculation so that the appropriate adjustments can be made – the Labour and Conservative Groups passing one seat each to the Green Group - following this change to the political composition of the Council.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and Part 4 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS	
The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact Officer: Debbie Chambers Telephone: 01524 582057 E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk

THE RULES

The main rules are set out in s. 15(5) LGHA, and they are to be applied sequentially. So Rule B cannot override Rule A; Rule C cannot override Rules A and B; and Rule D cannot override Rules A, B or C. An additional rule is set out in s. 16.

Rule A: all the seats on a committee or sub-committee may not be allocated to members of the same political Group. Note that this does not require that each political Group needs to be represented on each committee or sub-committee.

Rule B: where a majority of the members of Council are members of the same political Group, a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee must be allocated to that political Group. So, where there is a majority Group, it must be allocated a minimum of 2 seats on each committee or sub-committee of 3 members, 3 seats on each committee or sub-committee of 4 members, and so on. This means that, where a political Group enjoys a narrow majority on Council, that majority Group will be allocated significantly more seats than would result from simple proportionality. Incidentally, the combination of Rules A and B reinforces the point that the minimum size of a committee or sub-committee ought to be 3.

Rule C: deals with the aggregate of seats on all committees, taken together. [It does not apply to sub-committees, joint committees or outside bodies (see later)]. It provides that, subject to Rules A and B, the relationship between the total number of committee seats allocated to each Group and the total number of seats on all committees must, as near as possible, be the same as the relationship between the number of members of the Group as a proportion of the total number of members of Council. This is subject to Rules A and B.

Rule D: Having worked out how many committee seats are to be allocated to each political Group, Rule D then determines which committees those seats relate to. Rule D now says that, taking each committee separately, the seats on that committee must be allocated as close to proportionately as possible, without offending Rules A, B or C

There is also a "**Rule E**", inserted into s.16 by reg. 16(3), which provides that, where appointments to seats are to be made other than in accordance with Rules A to D (i.e. to seats which are not allocated to a political Group) then the Council or the committee must appoint members to those seats who are not members of a political Group. The exact wording is:

“(2A) Where appointments fall to be made to seats on a body to which section 15 applies otherwise than in accordance with a determination under that section, it shall be the duty of the authority or the committee, as the case may be, so to exercise their power to make appointments as to secure that the persons appointed to those seats are not members of any political Group.”

CABINET

6.00 P.M.

4TH JUNE 2024

PRESENT:- Councillors Phillip Black (Chair), Caroline Jackson, Joanne Ainscough, Gina Dowding, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Peter Jackson, Jean Parr, Catherine Potter and Jason Wood

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillor Nick Wilkinson

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Davies	Chief Executive
Luke Gorst	Chief Officer - Governance and Monitoring Officer
Joanne Wilkinson	Chief Officer - Housing and Property
Maurice Brophy	Service Manager - Planning and Housing Strategy
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 April 2024 were approved as a correct record.

2 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

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

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members were advised that there had been no requests to speak at the meeting in accordance with Cabinet's agreed procedure.

It was noted that Councillor Parr had been delayed and with the agreement of the meeting the Chair suggested a revision to the order of the agenda with the item on Biodiversity Duty Obligations, which was in the names of Councillors Ainscough and Parr, considered following Councillor Parr's arrival.

5 PRODUCTIVITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT - 'PRODUCTIVITY PLAN'

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Phillip Black)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to endorse the council's Productivity Plan, in response to the Productivity in Local Government request, from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC).

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option,

were set out in the report as follows:

	Option 1: Endorse the Productivity Plan for submission.	Option 2: Do not endorse the Productivity Plan for submission.
Advantages	If endorsed, officers will be able to finalise the Productivity Plan and submit of time.	No specific advantages are identified for this option. Although this could enable further re drafting in time for the submission deadline.
Disadvantages	No specific disadvantages are identified for this option.	The Council must submit its productivity plan by the submission date.
Risks	None identified.	None identified.

The recommended option is to proceed with endorsing the Productivity Plan so that officers can submit the final version (Option 1).

Councillor Phillip Black proposed, seconded by Councillor Hamilton-Cox:-

“That the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the finalising and submission of the Productivity Plan be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Executive

Reasons for making the decision:

The Productivity Plan mirrors current Policy Framework and will contribute to strategic and financial decision-making already set out in the Council Plan 2024-2027. Cabinet endorsement will enable officers to submit the Productivity Plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Councillor Parr joined the meeting during consideration of the following item.

6 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Wood)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer- Housing and Property to provide an update on changes to complaints handling in line with the new joint Code of Practice from the Housing Ombudsman and Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, including share performance information and required / voluntary self-assessments.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

	Option 1: That the approach to complaint code compliance as set out in this report be approved	Option 2: That an alternative approach to complaint handling be proposed
Advantages	Reassurance remains in place with regard to housing complaints, and the Council uses the voluntary requirements of the code to improve and standardise complaint handling across the wider Council with a view to compliance within 12 months time, in preparation for the LGSCO mandating this requirement	Unknown
Disadvantages	The Council accepts current non-compliance as a realistic position for non-housing complaints with a view to continuous improvement.	Unknown
Risks	Inconsistency of complaint handling while new processes are bedded in.	Unknown

Option 1 is the preferred officer option as this allows officers to work towards a realistic plan for full compliance across the Council.

Councillor Wood proposed, seconded by Councillor Caroline Jackson:-

“That recommendation 1 as set out in the report be approved with recommendation 2 revised to read: *that Cabinet delegate the ability to provide a publishable statement to Chief Officer for Housing and Property in consultation with the portfolio holder with responsibility for Complaints.*”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet notes the proposal set out in this report and approves the principles and approach to complaint handling across the Council.
- (2) That Cabinet delegate the ability to provide a publishable statement to Chief Officer for Housing and Property in consultation with the portfolio holder with responsibility for Complaints.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer – Housing and Property

Reasons for making the decision:

The decision is consistent with the Council Plan priority of *A Co-operative, Kind, and Responsible Council*.

Effective complaint handling and the adoption of a positive complaints culture offers vital feedback on service delivery and should be treated as an opportunity for improvement. The joint Complaint Code adopted by the HO and LGCSO provides clarity in this area. It prioritises open, transparent communication with complainants; consistency in responses and response times; accessibility for complainants; and a strong focus on evidenced learning from complaints. The proposals set out in the report outline the Council's commitment to effective complaint handling, confirms in which areas the Council is already compliant, and outlines an ambition for full compliance.

7 MEETING THE ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY DUTY OBLIGATIONS

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillors Parr and Ainscough)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change to formally set out the City Council's enhanced statutory responsibilities for biodiversity introduced as part of the Environment Act 2021. The Environment Act introduced a new Biodiversity Duty for all public authorities. The new Duty requires all public authorities who operate in England to consider what they can do to strengthen and enhance biodiversity and report on the delivery of these actions.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

	Option 1: Cabinet approves the actions set out in 'Meeting the Biodiversity Duty – First Considerations' (Appendix 1 to this report) to ensure that it can demonstrate that it has taken appropriate action to address new Biodiversity Duty obligations introduced by Environment Act 2021.	Option 2: Cabinet does not approve the actions set out in 'Meeting the Biodiversity Duty – First Considerations' (Appendix 1 to this report) to ensure that it can demonstrate that it has taken appropriate action to address new Biodiversity Duty obligations introduced by Environment Act 2021.
Advantages	The Council sets itself a clear set of actions that should enable it to demonstrate that it has acted responsibly and appropriately to address the new Biodiversity Duty introduced by the Environment Act whilst also demonstrating actions to address its own declaration of an Ecological Emergency.	None apparent.
Disadvantages	None apparent.	The Council will not have committed to achieving a clear

		set of actions that should enable it to demonstrate that it has acted responsibly and appropriately to address the new Biodiversity Duty introduced by the Environment Act whilst also demonstrating actions to address its own declaration of an Ecological Emergency.
Risks	In describing its intentions to address the new obligations and publishing its First Considerations Report the Council will be committing itself to actions that it will need to resource.	The Council may be criticised or censured by government for not preparing a First Consideration Report when the need to do so is clearly set out by the Environment Act 2021.

The preferred option is Option 1: Cabinet approves the actions set out in 'Meeting the Biodiversity Duty – First Considerations' (Appendix 1 to this report) to ensure that it can demonstrate that it has taken appropriate action to address new Biodiversity Duty obligations introduced by Environment Act 2021. In doing so the Council will have set itself a clear set of actions that should enable it to demonstrate that it has acted responsibly and appropriately to address the new Biodiversity Duty introduced by the Environment Act whilst also demonstrating actions to address its own declaration of an Ecological Emergency.

Councillor Ainscough proposed, seconded by Councillor Dowding:-

"That the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved."

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet approves the actions set out in 'Meeting the Biodiversity Duty – First Considerations' report to ensure that the City Council can demonstrate that it intends to take appropriate actions to address the enhanced Biodiversity Duty obligations introduced by Environment Act 2021.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change

Reasons for making the decision:

The decision is consistent with the Council Plan: The objectives of the report support and complement The Council Plan's Ambition 1.4 "Respecting Nature" on Ecology & Biodiversity to "increase biodiversity, protect our district's unique ecology and ensure the habitat provided for wildlife is maintained".

The decision is also consistent with the Planning & Climate Change Service Business Plan 2024-2025: The objectives of the report support and complement the Service Business Plan objective 1.4 on Respecting Nature. This sets Service priorities aligned

with the Council Plan that aim to integrate the new Biodiversity Officer role into service to help deliver net gains across the district.

8 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Phillip Black)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive that provided Cabinet with an update on the authority's progress in updating the Strategic Risk Register.

During consideration of this report clarification was sought with regard to a risk within the exempt appendix and with the agreement of the meeting Cabinet excluded the press and public whilst the Chief Executive provided that clarification. The press were then re-admitted to the meeting.

As the report was for noting no options were provided.

Resolved unanimously:

That the updated Strategic Risk Registers for Q3 and Q4 23/24, as appended to the report be noted.

Reasons for making the decision:

The Council have a Risk Management Policy, which is written to provide guidance on the management of risk. Risk Management is identified in the Council Plan 2024-27.

9 PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE: Q4 2023-24

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive that provided an update on performance and projects during quarter four of 2023 - 24 (January - March 2024).

As the report was for commenting and noting no options were provided.

Resolved unanimously:

That the report be noted.

Reasons for making the decision:

Monitoring of strategic projects and key performance indicators provides a link between the Council Plan 24-27 by providing progress updates.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.06 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Liz Bateson, Democratic Support - email ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk**

MINUTES PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY 6 JUNE 2024

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:
FRIDAY 14 JUNE, 2024.**