

CABINET

6.00 P.M.

10TH SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT:- Councillors Caroline Jackson, Joanne Ainscough, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Peter Jackson, Jean Parr, Catherine Potter, Paul Stubbins, Nick Wilkinson and Jason Wood

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillor Phillip Black (Chair)

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Davies	Chief Executive
Luke Gorst	Chief Officer - Governance and Monitoring Officer
Paul Thompson	Chief Officer - Resources and Section 151 Officer
Mark Cassidy	Chief Officer - Planning and Climate Change
Joanne Wilkinson	Chief Officer - Housing and Property
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

In the absence of the Leader the Deputy Leader took the chair

22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Tuesday 9 July 2024 and Wednesday 31 July 2024 were approved as a correct record.

23 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

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

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point.

25 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

26 LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY REPORTING PROCEDURE

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Ainscough)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change that set out the purpose of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), describing the role of the strategy in agreeing priorities for nature's recovery across Lancashire. It explained how, on completion, the LNRS would map the most valuable existing areas for nature across the County as well as identify those new areas where habitats could be created or strengthened to improve connectivity and enhance biodiversity.

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

	Option 1: Cabinet grants delegated powers to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change to ensure that the City Council in its role as supporting authority responds to the LNRS consultation within the set 28-day timeframe	Option 2: Cabinet does not grant delegated powers to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change to ensure that the City Council in its role as supporting authority responds to the LNRS consultation within the set 28-day timeframe.
Advantages	The City Council will be able to respond within the 28-day timeframe ensuring that where it has concerns there is the opportunity to address these ahead of the LNRS being published.	None
Disadvantages	None	The City Council is unable to respond within the 28-day timeframe with its concerns not raised and the LNRS published in a form not supported by the City Council.
Risks	None	None

The preferred option is Option 1: Cabinet grants delegated powers to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change to ensure that the City Council in its role as supporting authority responds to the draft LNRS consultation and publication LNRS within the set 28-day timeframe. Granting delegated powers will ensure the City Council will be able to fulfil its role as a supporting authority within the required timeframes. This will ensure that the views of the City Council are taken into account and where concerns are raised there is the opportunity to address these ahead of consultation of the draft LNRS. It will also ensure that the final LNRS cannot be published unless the City Council agrees with it.

In view of the limited time for approval Officers are requesting that delegated powers be granted to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change to approve the LNRS for draft consultation and then later for publication on behalf of the City Council. It is understood that similar approval is being requested at other supporting authorities across the County.

Councillor Ainscough proposed, seconded by Councillor Wood:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That delegated power be granted to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate

Change to make decisions on the progress of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), particularly in regard of approving the draft LNRS for consultation and to approve the publication of the final LNRS.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change

Reasons for making the decision:

Whilst Lancashire County Council is responsible for the preparation of the strategy Lancaster City Council is identified as a supporting authority, responsible for assisting the County Council in identifying local priorities and importantly in providing approval of the strategy for wider consultation at its draft stage and again prior to its publication. The regulations state that the supporting authorities will be given 28 days to grant this approval. In view of the limited time for approval respective decisions are delegated to the Chief Officer of Planning and Climate Change to approve the LNRS on behalf of the Council.

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 objectives of the report support and complement the Planning and Climate Change Service Business Plan objective 1.4 on Respecting Nature. This sets Service priorities aligned with the Council Plan that aim to increase biodiversity and ensure wildlife is maintained and improved.

27 PROVISIONAL REVENUE, CAPITAL AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2023/24

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Finance Officer that provided summary information regarding the provisional outturn for 2023/24, including treasury management. It also set out information regarding the carry forward of capital slippage and other matters for Members' consideration.

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

The Council has a legal requirement to ensure that its expenditure is fully funded and to produce accounts in accordance with proper accounting practice. In addition, the Prudential Indicators are a statutory requirement linked to the budgetary framework. For these aspects, therefore, there are no alternative options for Cabinet to consider. Members are being asked to endorse certain actions taken by the Chief Finance Officer, and Cabinet should consider whether it has sufficient information to do so or whether it requires any further justification.

The report requests Cabinet to consider a number of revenue overspending, capital slippage and other budget adjustment matters. The framework for considering these is

set out in the report but basically Cabinet may:

- Endorse any number of the items / requests, in full or part
- Refuse various requests and if commitments have already been incurred, require alternative funding options to be identified. Cabinet should note, however, that this may impact on other areas of service delivery
- Request further information regarding them, if appropriate.

The Officer preferred options are as set out in the recommendations, on the assumption that Members continue to support their previously approved spending plans.

Although both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account were able to respond to the financial challenges in 2023/24 and maintain balanced budget positions by utilising its reserves, this does not mean that the financial issues for the Council are resolved, it simply means that the in-year budget pressures were addressed. To put into context, a budget gap of £1.4M is still forecast for 2025/26 and this rises annually to £4.6M in 2028/29 for which the cumulative effect is not sustainable.

The Council has embarked on a programme called Outcomes-Based Resourcing (OBR)/Fit for the Future (FftF) that will see it examine every area of its budget and match resources more closely with its priorities. The OBR/FftF programme includes looking at ways the council can do things differently by utilising technology and being more efficient, as well as considering areas in which it can generate more income.

Given the size of the ongoing financial issues the Council faces this fundamental reshaping of the Council's services and realigning against its priorities through the OBR/FftF process will be key to shrinking the estimated budget gap and securing the financial sustainability of the Council going forward. It is imperative that the work, or similar principles continues. The application of OBR/FftF across the Council will be a significant piece of work and to fully achieve its stated aims will take an estimated further 12 to 24 months.

Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team have agreed on principles and common goals as they continue to work through the OBR/FftF process.

- We need to continue tackle the structural deficit over the short medium and long term
- We need to use reserves carefully to transition
- We want to continue to deliver services that residents/ businesses need and rely on
- We want to achieve positive outcomes for our district

However, if these are not successful and the deficit is not closed, then balances will be required to make up the difference.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox proposed, seconded by Councillor Wood:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

(1) That the provisional outturn for 2023/24 be endorsed, including the transfers to

and from Reserves and Balances actioned by the Chief Finance Officer as set out in 5.1 and Appendix 5 to the report.

- (2) That Cabinet approves the treatment of year end overspends and endorse the do-nothing approach in-light of the current situation.
- (3) That Cabinet note and endorse the ongoing projects funded by reserves set out at Appendices 5a and 6 to the report.
- (4) That the requests for capital slippage and the adjustments to reflect accelerated capital spending on projects as set out at Appendices 7 and 8 to the report be endorsed, with the Capital Programme being updated accordingly.
- (5) That the Annual Treasury Management report and Prudential Indicators as set out at Appendix 2 to the report be noted and referred on to Budget & Performance Panel and Council for information.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Finance Office

Reasons for making the decision:

The Outturn and Statement of Accounts report on all the financial resources generated and/or used by the Council in providing services or undertaking other activities under the Policy Framework.

28 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES QUARTER 1 2024-25

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive and S151 Officer that provided an update on financial performance during the first quarter of 2024/25 (April-June 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:

Performance, project and resource monitoring provides a link between the Council plan and operational achievement by providing regular updates on the impact of operational initiatives against strategic aims.

29 PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

(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 1 of 2024-25 (April-June 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.

30 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

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

As the report was for noting no options were provided.

Resolved unanimously:

That the updated Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 1 2024/25 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.

31 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Ainscough:-

"That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act."

Members then voted as follows:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

32 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY SALE, LANCASTER (Pages 8 - 9)

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing and Property with regard to the disposal of a commercial property. The report was exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the exempt report.

Resolved:

The resolution is set out in a minute exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Housing and Property

Reasons for making the decision:

The decision is consistent with Council priorities. Exactly how the decision fits with Council priorities is set out in the exempt minute.

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 FRIDAY 13 SEPTEMBER,2024.

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:
MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER ,2024.**

Document is Restricted