

## CABINET

6.00 P.M.

15TH APRIL 2025

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Caroline Jackson (Chair), Peter Jackson, Martin Bottoms, Gina Dowding, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Paul Hart, Sally Maddocks, Sue Tyldesley and Nick Wilkinson

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Davies	Chief Executive
Mark Cassidy	Chief Officer - Planning and Climate Change
William Griffith	Chief Officer - Environment and Place
Rephael Walmsley	Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

### 76 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

### 77 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

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

### 78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point.

### 79 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

### 80 CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Maddocks)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer, Environment and Place to review and approve a revised Corporate Enforcement Policy in order to take account of updated guidance, codes of practice and new regulatory sanctions which have been introduced since the Council's Enforcement Policy was last reviewed in 2013.

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

	Option 1: Approve the proposed Policy	Option 2: Do not approve the proposed policy
Advantages	The Council will have an up to date policy.	None identified.
Disadvantages	None identified	The Council's existing policy will remain out of date.

Risks	None identified	The Council would be open to challenge when undertaking enforcement.
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The officer preferred option is Option1 to approve the proposed policy. Once this policy has been adopted, Council services will be able to start developing and/or amending their own specific policies for enforcement in their areas which reflect the principles set out in this overarching policy.

Councillor Maddocks proposed, seconded by Councillor Tyldesley:-

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved with a revision to the wording in 7.1 with the removal of ‘officers’ replaced with ‘processes and procedures’ so the paragraph would now read *‘Complaints about the conduct of processes and procedures should be made via the Council’s corporate complaints procedure.’*”

Councillors then voted on the revised proposition:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That the draft Enforcement Policy be approved and adopted following a revision to the wording of the second paragraph in 7.1 which would now read *‘Complaints about the conduct of processes and procedures should be made via the Council’s corporate complaints procedure.’*
- (2) That the contents of the report noted.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Chief Officer Environment and Place

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The decision is consistent with the Council Plan. The enforcement policy helps the Council achieve its broader strategic goals relating to areas such as sustainable development, community safety and environmental protection. By setting out how we address breaches of regulations we will create a fair and equitable environment for residents and businesses.

**81 PUBLICATION OF AN UPDATED LOCAL PLAN PREPARATION TIMETABLE**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Tyldesley)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Planning and Climate Change that sought Cabinet approval for the publication of an updated Local Plan Preparation Timetable.

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

	Option 1: Approve the publication of an updated Local Plan preparation timetable for the Lancaster District Local Plan.	Option 2: Do not approve the publication of an updated Local Plan preparation timetable for the Lancaster District Local Plan.
Advantages	The Government has been unambiguous in its instruction to Local Planning Authorities in directing them to publish and submit a new local plan timetable that responds to the forthcoming guidance and regulations for preparing a new local plan. Though the Council has published an Interim Timetable it was submitted on the basis that Cabinet would consider the timetable and make a formal decision. By submitting a formally approved new local plan timetable the Council will comply with the Government's direction and demonstrate its commitment to achieving local development, most particularly the delivery of new housing to the district's residents, businesses, and stakeholders.	None are apparent.
Disadvantages	None are apparent.	The Council would fail to comply with the Government's unambiguous instruction to Local Planning Authorities to publish and submit a new local plan timetable that responds to the forthcoming guidance and regulations for preparing a new local plan. The Government has not specified what sanctions it might impose on Local Planning Authorities that fail to comply with the directive but by not complying the Council would signal to government that it either is not willing or not enabled to prepare a new Local Plan that demonstrates its commitment to achieving local development, most particularly the delivery of new housing, to the district's residents, businesses and stakeholders.

Risks	None are apparent. Whilst the Council will make a formal commitment to progress to its published timetable it may still need to be revised in future to take account of the impact of changing circumstances and events.	The Council might appear on a list of Local Planning Authorities that have not demonstrated the commitment and willingness to comply with responsibilities and obligations to plan for the homes, and other types of development that legislation and national guidance require. Considering the potential need to explore future funding for infrastructure or regeneration proposals an unwillingness or an inability to demonstrate commitment to preparing a Local Plan is not likely to enhance the Council's reputation as a responsible partner with government.
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The officer preferred option is Option 1: Approve the publication of an updated Local Plan preparation timetable for the Lancaster District Local Plan.

The report does provide Cabinet Members with the opportunity to formally consider and approve both the updated timetable and the statements about the matters that the local plan will address. The Government has signalled that it intends to be firm in achieving up to date local plans, the directive to prepare a new timetable is clear and there would seem to be little to achieved by not complying with the government's clear instruction.

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

"That the recommendation, as set out in the report, be approved with the following two additional recommendations:-

- (2) *that in confirming the Local Plan Timetable to Government, officers state that this council is ready to start on a new Local Plan following publication of the appropriate Regulations and would like to schedule the first Gateway Assessment for the very beginning of January 2026 as one of the first Local Authorities to engage with the new process.*
- (3) *that officers take all possible steps to ensure that the process is complete to an adopted Local Plan before Local Government Reorganisation affects Lancaster. In this respect the timetable will be kept under review, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Planning, both when the new Regulations are published and subsequently at all relevant stages."*

By way of an amendment which was accepted as a friendly amendment Councillor Dowding proposed that the word 'district' be inserted after Lancaster in recommendation (3).

Councillors then voted on the revised proposition:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That Cabinet approves the publication of an updated Local Plan preparation timetable for the Lancaster District Local Plan.
- (2) That in confirming the Local Plan Timetable to Government, officers state that this council is ready to start on a new Local Plan following publication of the appropriate Regulations and would like to schedule the first Gateway Assessment for the very beginning of January 2026 as one of the first Local Authorities to engage with the new process.
- (3) That officers take all possible steps to ensure that the process is complete to an adopted Local Plan before Local Government Reorganisation affects Lancaster District. In this respect the timetable will be kept under review, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Planning, both when the new Regulations are published and subsequently at all relevant stages.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Chief Officer Planning and Climate Change

**Reasons for making the decision:**

Cabinet is the part of the Council which is responsible for taking executive decisions and implementing the Council's Budget and Policy Framework and the Local Development Plan and Development Plan Documents are components of that Framework. The constitution states that decisions made about documents on the Policy Framework must be made by full Council, usually on the recommendation of Cabinet. The Local Plan Timetable is not in itself policy, it is the work programme for creating policy documents that will be decided by full Council. Cabinet is therefore the appropriate component of the Council to make decisions about the work programme for preparing policy documents.

**82 PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE: Q3 2024-25****(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive that provided members with an update on corporate performance and strategic projects during quarter three of 2024 - 25 (October - December 2024).

As the report was for commenting and noting no options were provided. Questions were asked with regard to energy usage, Mainway, Williamson Park café , the Fair Work charter and solar array.

***Resolved:***

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.

### **83 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER MANAGEMENT**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

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.

As the report was for noting and comments no options were provided. It was noted that SR24 the ICT Data Centre would be discussed at CAG in May.

***Resolved:***

That 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.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 6.52 p.m.)

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

**MINUTES PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY 17 APRIL ,2025.**

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:  
TUESDAY 29 APRIL ,2025.**