

CABINET

6.00 P.M.

16TH SEPTEMBER 2025

PRESENT:- Councillors Caroline Jackson (Chair), Peter Jackson, Mandy Bannon, Martin Bottoms, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Paul Hart, Sam Riches and Sue Tyldesley

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillor Sally Maddocks

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Davies	Chief Executive
Luke Gorst	Chief Officer - Governance and Monitoring Officer
Paul Thompson	Chief Officer - Resources and Section 151 Officer
Jonathan Noad	Chief Officer - Sustainable Growth
Paul Rogers	Regeneration Service Manager
Paul Hatch	Principal Planning Policy Officer
Emma Coffey	Conservation Officer, Regeneration and Policy
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

40 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 31 July 2025 were approved as a correct record.

41 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

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

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point although Councillor Tyldesley made a declaration regarding the Adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals during consideration of that item in view of her living in one of the affected areas. Minute 46 refers).

43 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

44 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Maddocks)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing and Property that provided an update to developments in complaints handling within council services in line with the joint Code of Practice issued by the Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government

and Social Care Ombudsman (2024). The report provided performance information and the required self-assessments against the code.

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

	Option 1: To approve the recommendations as set out in the report.	Option 2: That an alternative approach to complaint handling be proposed
Advantages	Ensures continued compliance with mandatory Code (housing) and prepares for future expected mandatory compliance across all services. Improves consistency and builds a learning culture. Continued improvement work required in non-housing areas	Unknown
Disadvantages	Continued resource requirements required on an area not yet mandatory for the Council.	Unknown
Risks	Inconsistency may persist while new systems embed.	Risk of non-compliance, reputational harm, and missed opportunity to improve customer service.

The officer preferred option was option 1: This allows officers to work towards a realistic plan for full compliance across the council in time for the expected mandatory requirement in 12 months' time. It promotes a resident focused approach to complaints, and service improvement. It also supports the continued development of IT solutions to promote a streamlined, and consistent service for residents.

During questions an update was requested on the 3 cases that remained open from March 2025. Cabinet members suggested that the work indicated how seriously the Council took the issue of complaints and requested that the thanks of Cabinet to those involved be noted.

Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Riches:-

"That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved,"

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the Cabinet member with responsibility for complaints be delegated to agree a statement to be published by the end of September 2025 on the Council's complaints handling in accordance with the Code.
- (2) That Cabinet approve the both the Complaint self-assessment forms and

endorse the annual report and service improvement plans for 2025 and that all documents are published.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Housing & Property

Reasons for making the decision:

Generally, residents who have reached the stage of making a formal complaint against the Council are using this mechanism to show genuine and reasonable dissatisfaction. Effective and unified complaint handling and the continuation of the development of a positive complaints culture offers vital feedback on service delivery and should be treated as a genuine opportunity for improvement.

The Code provides a clear and unified framework to ensure complaints are taken seriously, handled fairly, and used to drive improvement. 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 report and associated Appendices set out the progress made across housing and non-housing services, and our continued commitment to accountability and learning and supports the Council's wider vision of being a 'Co-operative, Kind and Responsible Council'.

45

RENEWAL TO REGULATION 7 DIRECTION UNDER TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS) (ENGLAND) REGULATION 2007

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Tyldesley)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Planning & Climate Change which sought authorisation for the Chief Officer (Planning & Climate Change) to proceed with the statutory process and submit a proposal to the Secretary of State requesting that a Direction under Regulation 7 be renewed. The Direction had been in place for 5 years and had been successful in managing 'To Let' boards.

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

	Option 1: Submit a request to the Secretary of State to renew the designation of a Direction under Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 for the wards of Bulk, Castle, John	Option 2: Submit a request to the Secretary of State to renew the designation of a Direction under Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007	Option 3: Do not progress a Regulation 7 Direction under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.
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	O'Gaunt, Marsh, Scotforth East and Scotforth West.	for the wards described in Option 1 and additional wards in the District.	
Advantages	<p>The renewal of the Direction under Article 7 will ensure that the current regime of managing 'to let' advertisements remain in place in the wards described and no new proliferation of signage occurs over the next 5 years. It will continue to manage this matter in the wards which have been historically most affected by these signage issues.</p> <p>Starting the process now provides sufficient time for the renewal to take place, informal consultation to be undertaken and a decision from the Secretary of State to be received.</p>	The addition of further wards would provide the opportunity to expand the geographic scope of the Article 7 Direction to include other areas of the district where it is believed that these issues with signage are occurring.	None known
Disadvantages	None known	<p>Expanding the geographic scope of the Article 7 direction would not constitute a renewal of the process. It would require sufficient robust evidence that a demonstrable problem exists in additional areas of the district to justify such action.</p> <p>This would require significant additional evidence</p>	Allowing the Direction to lapse in September 2026 could allow for a re1establishment of 'to let' signs in the Wards identified and a return to the issues which were identified prior to the Direction coming into force.

		<p>to be gathered to justify expanding the scope of the Direction.</p> <p>It is not clear there is sufficient evidence to justify an expansion in the scope of the Direction.</p>	
Risks	None known	<p>Should this option be pursued further work would be required to secure the necessary evidence to justify an expansion of the scope of the Direction.</p> <p>Regardless of whether sufficient evidence could be secured to justify the need for an expansion, this would take time to collect and analyse which would risk a delay in securing a decision from the Secretary of State and the current Direction lapsing.</p>	<p>In the absence of any management of 'to let' signs under the Article 7 Direction the issues around visual amenity and impacts on the street scene in the wards identified may increase.</p>

The preferred option is Option 1. The renewal of the current Article 7 Direction provides the most effective approach to continuing management of this issue in the most affected wards. The City Council have the evidence to demonstrate the historical problems around 'to let' signage in these areas and the success which the Direction has had on improving this matter. This means that a renewal of the Direction can be progressed as quickly as possible.

It is recommended that authorisation is given for the Chief Officer (Planning & Climate Change) to proceed with the statutory process and submit a proposal to the Secretary of State requesting that a Direction under Regulation 7 is to be renewed.

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

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet authorise the renewal of the Regulation 7 Direction under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, to prohibit the display of To Let boards on residential properties in the wards of Bulk, Castle, John O'Gaunt, Marsh, Scotforth East and Scotforth West, without express consent and to comply with all necessary requirements.
- (2) That delegated authority is provided to the Chief Officer for Planning & Climate Change to submit the proposed renewal to the Secretary of State.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Planning & Climate Change

Reasons for making the decision:

The decision is consistent with the Council Plan.

The Council Plan includes ambitions to make our neighbourhoods clean, well maintained and safe. The Lancaster District Local Plan includes policies which seek to improve the amenity of residents in Lancaster and to protect the character and appearance. Policies in the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations Development Plan Document aim to ensure that development, including uses of buildings, maintain the district's heritage (SP7). Policy DM21 seeks to ensure that signage is well designed and appropriately sited and does not contribute to an unsightly proliferation or clutter of signage. Policies DM37 to 41 seek to ensure that the district heritage is protected or enhanced. The proposal seeks to address the detrimental impacts of concentration of letting boards associated to HMOs in accordance with the ambitions of the Council Plan and the Local Plan.

46 ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS FOR AND BOUNDARY CHANGES TO OVER KELLET, WHITTINGTON AND YEALAND CONYERS & REDMAYNE CONSERVATION AREAS

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Tyldesley)

Councillor Tyldesley declared an interest during the consideration of this item in view of her living in Yealand, one of the affected areas.

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Planning & Climate Change with regard to the adoption of Conservation Area Appraisals for and boundary changes to Over Kellet, Whittington and Yealand Conyers & Redmayne Conservation Areas.

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

	Option 1: To adopt the CAAs and approve the boundary changes	Option 2: Not to adopt the CAAs or approve the	Option 3: To adopt the CAAs without the
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		boundary changes	boundary changes (this would involve amending the CAAs)
Advantages	<p>Their adoption would be in accordance with national planning guidance (Government Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Historic England) which makes it clear that CAAs are the starting point for actively managing these significant parts of the historic environment.</p> <p>The CAAs would form part of the evidence base of the district's Local Plan.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (paragraph 203) states that "Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay and other threats. This strategy should take into account:</p> <p>a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;</p> <p>b) the wider social,</p>	None known	<p>Their adoption would be in accordance with national planning guidance (Government Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and Historic England) which makes it clear that CAAs are the starting point for actively managing these significant parts of the historic environment.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (paragraph 203) states that "Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay and other threats. This strategy should take into account:</p> <p>a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses</p>

	<p>cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;</p> <p>c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and</p> <p>d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.</p> <p>By approving the boundary changes, the council would be fulfilling its duties under Section 69(2) of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states that local planning authorities have a duty “from time to time to...determine whether any parts or further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas...”</p> <p>The CAAs will assist and guide the Development Management Team and Conservation Team in in their work managing development within this area, as well as having a wider application for officers, property owners and</p>		<p>consistent with their conservation;</p> <p>b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;</p> <p>c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and</p> <p>d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.</p> <p>The CAAs would assist and guide the Development Management Team and Conservation Team in in their work managing development within this area, as well as having a wider application for officers, property owners and the community as a reference tool and evidence base for better understanding the</p>
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	the community as a reference tool and evidence base for better understanding the area. Its adoption will give the document more weight as a material consideration in planning decisions.		area. Its adoption will give the document more weight as a material consideration in planning decisions.
Disadvantages	None known	Without formal adoption, the CAA would not carry as much weight and could not be relied upon as a material consideration in planning decisions. The Council would not be fulfilling a duty under s.69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see above).	Omitting the review of the boundary would mean that a fundamental element of the appraisal process had been overlooked. The Council would not be fulfilling a duty under s.69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see above).
Risks	None known	Without an adopted CAA, it will be harder to protect the CA from inappropriate development and more difficult to defend at appeal.	

The officer preferred option is Option 1. The adoption of the CAAs and the boundary changes align with heritage duties and requirements under the relevant Acts and the NPPF and national guidance. It would ensure that there is more robust protection in place for managing these conservation areas.

This report sets out the preferred way forward for (i) adopting conservation area appraisals for three existing conservation areas, and (ii) approving boundary extensions for them following a review of these areas, some 40-50 years since their original designation. These actions will help ensure that they are managed with a more thorough understanding of their significance going forward.

The Cabinet member with responsibility confirmed that a map detailing the conservation areas within the district would be circulated to Cabinet members.

Councillor Tyldesley proposed, seconded by Councillor Bottoms:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the adoption of the draft Conservation Area Appraisals for Over Kellet, Whittington and Yealand Conyers & Redmayne be approved.
- (2) That the proposed extensions to the current conservation area boundaries in these three settlements be approved.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Planning & Climate Change

Reasons for making the decision:

Government planning guidance relating to the historic environment is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) and the CAAs align with this.

The CAAs contribute to the Council's vision for the Lancaster district to thrive as vibrant regional centre in the north west of England, making the most of our district's many attributes as a great place to live, work and visit.

The Council Plan sets out the Council's priorities for 2024-2027, and the CAAs align with three of these, specifically:

- *A Sustainable District – encouraging the repair and re-use of existing buildings, which reduces waste and locks in carbon;*
- *An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy – supporting investment and regeneration; and*
- *Healthy and Happy Communities – supporting access to heritage and culture and quality public spaces.*

At a district level, the Local Plan sets out the Council's broad strategy for heritage conservation within the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (climate emergency review) DPD and the Development Management (climate emergency review) DPD, both adopted in January 2025. The CAAs align with these documents.

47 PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE: Q1 2025-26

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 one of 2025 - 26 (April - June 2025).

As the report was for commenting and noting no options were provided. Cabinet members responded to questions within their portfolios and the work of the Homelessness Team was applauded.

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.

48 STRATEGIC RISK 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 comments and noting no options were provided.

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.

49 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES: Q1 2025/26**Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive & 151 Officer that provided members with an update on financial performance during the first quarter of 2025/26 (April – June 2025).

As the report was for comments and noting no options were provided. In response to a question relating service support within Corporate Property Review the Cabinet member with responsibility confirmed that he would look into this and advise Cabinet members accordingly.

Resolved:

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.

50 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MID-YEAR REVIEW 2025/26

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Resources that provided information regarding the latest position regarding the delivery of the approved capital programme for 2025/26. It also set out information regarding any delays surrounding capital expenditure and other matters for Members' consideration.

As the report was for consideration and progressing to Full Council no alternative options were put forward.

Although the General Fund was able to respond to the financial challenges in 2024/25 and maintain balanced budget positions by utilising its reserves, this did not mean that the financial issues for the Council had been resolved, it simply means that the in-year budget pressures were addressed. To put into context, a budget gap of £2.6M was still forecast for 2026/27 and this would rise annually to £5.5M in 2029/30 for which the cumulative effect is not sustainable.

Reviewing the Capital Programme will allow for more robust revenue projections which in turn will improve financial planning. This will ensure that funds are allocated according to a set of predefined outcomes, or priorities to ensure that funds are directed toward the Council's key ambitions and statutory functions and away from areas which contribute less or not at all against the predetermined objectives.

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

"That recommendation (1) as set out in the report be approved, and recommendation (2) noted."

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the adjustments to the capital programme as set out in Appendix C of the report be endorsed and referred to Council for full approval.
- (2) That Cabinet note that relevant revenue adjustments in respect of minimum revenue provision and future borrowing requirements will be built into projected revenue estimates and considered alongside future reports to Cabinet in respect of the budget and policy framework updates.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Resources

Reasons for making the decision:

Effective use of the Councils' resources is fundamental to the delivery of its priorities and outcomes.

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing & Property that sought approval to accept government grant revenue funding to support progression towards increasing council house building within the District.

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

	Option 1: Do not accept the grant funding	Option 2: Accept the grant funding
Advantages	No advantages identified.	The Council will continue to be able to progress housing ambitions.
Disadvantages	Delivery of new housing ambitions will stall.	None known.
Risks/Mitigation	<p>Delivery of new housing ambitions will stall.</p> <p>Continued additional pressure on Council Officers supporting key housing projects without additional support.</p> <p>Missed opportunity for funded training on Homes England application system / development software could lead to incorrect Affordable Homes England applications submitted at some point in the future.</p>	As outlined in Appendix A (exempt).

The officer preferred option is Option 2: For the Council to accept the grant funding so as to seek to continue to drive forward opportunities to deliver much needed new housing within the District.

Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Peter Jackson:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

That should Lancaster City Council be successful in its Expression of Interest, Cabinet accept the Council Housebuilding Support Fund as set out in the report and authorise the s151 officer to sign off a funding agreement and Statement of Grant Usage.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Housing & Property

Reasons for making the decision:

Lancaster has key ambitions to deliver new housing for residents in need. Current financial constraints within the HRA are making these ambitions challenging to bring forward currently, therefore additional revenue grant funding to support momentum should not be overlooked.

The decision is consistent with Council Priorities :

A Sustainable District –Climate Emergency: Properties brought forward will be developed to a high standard, therefore benefitting residents with quality and warm homes.

An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy – opportunities for local contractors to be employed as part of development opportunities.

The decision is also consistent with the Housing Strategy and will link directly to the Homes Strategy for Lancaster District 2020- 2025 by seeking to increase provision of affordable housing.

52 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES (Page 17)**Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to enable Cabinet to appoint members to a number of Outside Bodies and Partnerships following a revision to the membership of Cabinet and portfolio areas. The appointments affected by the portfolio changes were highlighted in the appendix to the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Caroline Jackson, seconded by Councillor Riches and resolved unanimously when put to the vote:-

Resolved unanimously:

That the revisions to the Cabinet appointments to outside bodies as set out in the appendix be approved.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Governance

Reasons for making the decision:

Representation on Outside Bodies is part of the City Council's Community Leadership role.

53 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Riches and seconded by Councillor Bottoms:-

“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.

**54 CENTENARY HOUSE (FORMER CO-OP BUILDING), MORECAMBE:
PROCUREMENT OF A PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER (Pages 18 - 21)**

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Bottoms)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Sustainable Growth to consider the progress and next steps for the council's Centenary House building, the former Co-op on Regent Road, Morecambe, to secure the positive reuse of this long-term vacant property. The report was exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3, of 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 unanimously:

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 Sustainable Growth

Reasons for making the decision:

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

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.18 p.m.)

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

MINUTES PUBLISHED ON FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2025

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

CABINET APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES – CONFIRMED SEPTEMBER 2025

BID Company Ltd (Morecambe) *Cllr Bottoms*

Community Safety Partnership (Cabinet Member and reserve) *Cllr M Bannon (Cllr C Jackson reserve)*

Health and Wellbeing Partnership (Cabinet Member and reserve) *Cllr M Bannon (Cllr C Jackson reserve)*

Lancashire Leaders Meeting (Leader of the Council) *Cllr C Jackson*

District Leaders Board (Leader of the Council) *Cllr C Jackson*

Lancashire Waste Partnership *Cllr Hart*

Lancaster Community Fund Grants Panel (1 place; the other place is by nomination and voting at Council) *Cllr M Bannon*

Lancaster Business Improvement District (BID) Management Group *Cllr P Jackson*

LGA General Assembly (Leader of the Council) *Cllr C Jackson*

Yorkshire Dales National Park Board *Cllr P Jackson*

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