

CABINET

6.00 P.M.

21ST OCTOBER 2025

PRESENT:- Councillors Caroline Jackson (Chair), Peter Jackson, Mandy Bannon, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Paul Hart, Sally Maddocks and Sue Tyldesley

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Martin Bottoms and Sam Riches

Officers in attendance:-

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

55 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

56 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

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

57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made with regard to Agenda Item 13: Letting of Community Asset (Ryelands House):

Councillors Bannon, Hamilton-Cox and Caroline Jackson all declared an interest in view of them being acquainted with the Director of the North Lancashire Community Land Trust through being on the council and ward work. The interest was not pecuniary.

58 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

59 RISK APPETITE

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to enable Cabinet to review the appropriate risk appetite levels for the Council.

No options were provided. Cabinet was asked to refresh the recommended risk levels. Should any adjustments be proposed, officers would need to produce a further report providing more details on any implications of this.

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 having reviewed the risk appetite levels for risks across the Council, as set out in appendix A to the report, the proposals be endorsed by Cabinet.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Executive

Reasons for making the decision:

The Council has 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. The Council has different risk appetites set, depending on the type of risk. The risk appetite was last reviewed by Cabinet in December 2023 and needed to be reviewed again, following the move from a 4x4 to a 5x5 risk scoring matrix.

60 REVIEW OF COUNCIL HOUSING TENANCY AGREEMENT

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing & Property that sought approval from Cabinet to consult with tenants on proposed changes to the council housing Tenancy Agreement relating to secure and introductory tenants.

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

	Option 1: Do nothing – continue with the existing tenancy agreement	Option 2: Cabinet approves the proposal to revise the tenancy agreement
Advantages	Simplicity of continuation. Cost savings (minimal e.g. postage costs)	The tenancy agreement is updated to ensure that it meets current standards and requirements, and is fit for purpose. The tenancy agreement remains an effective management tool. The Tenancy Agreement provides tenants with sufficient

		information to understand their rights and obligations in relation to their home.
Disadvantages	The existing tenancy agreement does not reflect current standards and requirements. This may mean that the Council does not meet the required consumer standards.	Costs of implementation will be incurred with postage – writing to tenants twice.
Risks	<p>The tenancy agreement will not be wholly fit for purpose as an effective management tool.</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing deems the Tenancy Agreement to be outdated and not fit for purpose, this could be a breach of the consumer standards.</p>	None known.

The Officer preferred option is Option 2 for the reasons set out above.

Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Bannon:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the Community Housing Manager be authorised to consult with tenants regarding the proposed changes to the Tenancy Agreement and to serve the necessary preliminary notice of variation.
- (2) That a further report be brought to Members following the completion of the consultation process seeking final approval.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Housing & Property

Reasons for making the decision:

The need has been identified for the Council to review its tenancy agreement to ensure that the agreement remains fit for purpose and can be used as an effective management tool. The agreement has also been updated to ensure that it meets tenant expectations in terms of clarity and understanding.

The decision is consistent with the Council Plan: – the proposal supports the Council's objectives: to be a Co-operative, Kind and Responsible Council and links to the Councils ambitions of Openness and the Councils Standards – Transparency, Influence and

Accountability.

The review is being undertaken in line with the Service Improvement Plan – 4.8 Council Housing tenancy agreement and license agreement updated to reflect current practices and in line with best practice and has been given a deadline date of completion of year 2.

61 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY 2025-2028

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Maddocks)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Governance for Cabinet members to consider the revised Statement of Gambling Policy for 2025-2028 and refer to Full Council for adoption.

Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 (“the Act”) provides that each Licensing Authority shall, before each successive period of three years, prepare a statement of the principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under the Act during that period, and publish that statement. The Licensing Committee approved the draft policy, in line with the Councils constitution and it was now necessary for Cabinet to make recommendations to Full Council for approval.

It was agreed that the report to Council would highlight the changes to the Gambling Policy which would be useful for members. Following concern regarding safeguarding of children it was suggested that consideration should be given to raising public awareness of the rules in terms of children. It was also noted that the report to full Council would include a revised preface.

Councillor Maddocks proposed, seconded by Councillor Bannon:-

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved with Cabinet’s comments reflected in the report to Full Council.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

That Cabinet endorse the revised Statement of Gambling Policy 2025-2028 and refer the policy to full Council for adoption with the referral report reflecting Cabinet’s comments.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Governance

Reasons for making the decision:

The Statement of Licensing Policy forms part of the Council’s Policy Framework.

It is important to follow the correct process in implementing the updated policy, with Licensing Committee making recommendations to the Councils Cabinet prior to adoption by Full Council. The absence of a valid policy leaves the Council susceptible to legal

challenge.

Whilst the following item was public it contained exempt appendices, and notice had been given that the press and public would need to be excluded from the meeting if reference needed to be made to the exempt appendices. During consideration of the item Cabinet voted unanimously to exclude the press and public in order to discuss one of the exempt appendices. The report and minute remain public for Skerton School Procurement remain public.

Resolved unanimously:

The press and public were excluded during the following item and Cabinet remained in private session for the duration of the meeting.

62 SKERTON SCHOOL PROCUREMENT

Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Caroline Jackson)

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing & Property that sought Cabinet approval for a twin-track procurement strategy and progress Preliminary Market Engagement to test partnership opportunities for the redevelopment of the Skerton School site and Mainway regeneration.

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

	Option1: Partnership	Option 2: Works contract	Option 3: Blended partnership/ contract options/ multiple partners	Option 4: Do nothing
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PME to explore market interest and models for a viable route to delivery within a partnership model. - Test market interest in models compatible with project outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant process via procurement frameworks - Mitigates volatility of construction costs - Strong Council control over design, sustainability standards, and tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility to combine different partnership and or contract models that are deemed best suited - Potential to attract a consortium of partners bringing complementary skills 	None

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transfer of major risks (funding, sales, development). - Injection of development expertise and capacity. - Reduced control over design detail and lettings policy. - Greater cost certainty for the Council within delivery model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially lower construction costs - Partial transfer of construction risk to contractor. 	<p>(funding, development, construction, management).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spreads risk by not relying on a single delivery partner. 	
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially higher long-term costs - Reduced control over design and delivery - Potentially reduced control as a council owed asset - Portability of grant provision into Partnership model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased pre-development cost and management costs - Significant management resource - Current unavailability of funding prior to CHSR - High financial burden on HRA - Affordability risk - mitigation via Homes England grant and potential new Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk of misaligned objectives between partners. - Longer negotiation period may slow mobilisation. - Added complexity in procurement, legal structures and governance. - Higher resource needed to manage multiple relationships. - Risk of misaligned objectives between 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to progress key procurement strategy

		borrowing programmes.	partners. - Longer negotiation period may slow mobilisation. - Added complexity in procurement, legal structures and governance. - Higher resource needed to manage multiple relationships.	
Risks and mitigation	- No appetite for engagement - Proposals not compatible viability/tenure/control	- Exploration of suitable frameworks to increase cost certainty may reduce management burden. However, a tender at this stage may risk predetermination challenge.	- Risk of fragmented delivery - mitigated through clear governance and robust partnership agreement. - Could confuse the market – PME will test interest. - Potential overlap or conflict between models, winning both sites may be vital to Partners business model	- Stagnation of the project objectives. - Pursue twin track approach.

The officer preferred recommendation is to proceed with Option 3, with engagement on

the broadest possible terms, providing a clear scope and definition of each site, and our priority to advance Skerton first in alignment with Homes England programmes.

The blended option will help shape the most viable partnering options for the Skerton development and the Mainway regeneration and ensure that both schemes are advanced in a coordinated and comprehensive context. In doing so, it will increase the attractiveness of the proposition to potential partners, signal opportunities for longer-term relationships, and demonstrate the Council's intent to bring forward Skerton as part of a wider regeneration of Mainway.

Cost plan assumptions may be compliantly reviewed through structured consultation supported by framework benchmarking and independent advice and provide a consistent baseline for comparison alongside partnership.

This is an efficient approach, which can be managed within the existing project resource and will generate a comprehensive range of responses and options to develop a preferred delivery model and navigates any perception of predetermination prior to a final decision by members.

Members noted that no single procurement route is fully developed at this stage. They therefore directed officers to pursue a twin-track approach, keeping both partnering and contract options open for Skerton. Members subsequently further agreed that engagement should be extended to include Mainway and signal the Council's intention to work with the market to bring this forward wider regeneration.

Councillor Caroline Jackson proposed, seconded by Councillor Hamilton-Cox:

"That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved with recommendation (1) revised with the deletion of 'estimate' and insertion of 'accurate account'.

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That Cabinet authorises officers to obtain an accurate account of the full costings in respect of a Council led Design & Build contract for the construction of housing on the Skerton School site such costings to be obtained via a suitable framework.
- (2) That approval be given to the commencement of Preliminary Market Engagement (PME) activity in respect of the construction of housing on the Skerton School site.
- (3) That approval be given to the commencement of PME activity in respect of the development of Mainway both as a procurement in its own right or alternatively as a procurement connected to the Skerton School development.
- (4) That officers be authorised to take all necessary steps to commence PME in respect of recommendation 2 and/or 3 in accordance with all requirements under the Procurement Act 2023.
- (5) That Cabinet notes that a further report will be brought back to Cabinet with a recommended preferred route once PME and cost benchmark analysis has been completed in respect of Skerton School and/ or Mainway.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Officer Housing & Property

Reasons for making the decision:

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.

Housing Strategy – will link directly to the Homes Strategy for Lancaster District 2020-2025 by seeking to increase provision of affordable housing.

The proposals ensure that Skerton is advanced as the first enabling phase, aligned with Homes England programmes, while also increasing the attractiveness of the overall proposition to potential partners. By signalling the long-term opportunity at Mainway, the Council can build interest, explore longer-term relationships, and position both schemes within a coordinated regeneration strategy.

The estimated value of the works is above the qualifying financial threshold, and the Council is required to follow the full statutory procurement procedure. The twin track proposal following a recommendation for a compliant PME brings forward partnering options and greater certainty for construction costs in a step-by-step approach and is supported by procurement advice.

It makes the best use of resource and enables the project programme deadlines to be achieved, avoids any perception of predetermination and positions the Council to move positively into the most appropriate formal tender once robust market evidence is available and there is clarity on CHSR funding and the Autumn statement.

63 INDUSTRIAL STYLE ROOF REPAIRS (Pages 12 - 13)**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing & Property that sought approval to undertake roof refurbishment works to key council buildings. 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 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 Housing & Property

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.

64 LETTING OF COMMUNITY ASSET (RYELANDS HOUSE) (Pages 14 - 16)**Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Officer Housing & Property that sought approval to accept a proposal to enter a lease arrangement with North Lancashire Community Land Trust.

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 Housing & Property

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 7.30 p.m.)

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

MINUTES PUBLISHED ON TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2025

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:
WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER, 2025**

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