



Leader's Report

15 April 2015

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

The Cabinet meeting scheduled for 24th March 2015 was cancelled through lack of business. Information on Cabinet matters from the meeting held on 17 February 2015, was considered by Council on 4th March 2015.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There were no urgent business decisions to report since the last Leader's Report of 4th March 2015.

3.0 Leader's Comments

Every year we produce reports which attempt to list our achievements during the year. Coming at the end of our four year period of office all Councillors are looking back, and hopefully looking forward to another four years.

I feel that the last four years have been a time of unprecedented austerity. Local Government has taken huge cuts in income and the future looks even less rosy. In spite of this, I feel that the Council has weathered the loss in income amazingly

well. However, having to use £1M of our reserves to balance the budget for the first time does not bode well. We cannot carry on like this.

Our staff have been amazing. Losing around 20% over the four years means that those remaining have had to achieve even more. I thank them all for their hard work. Senior officers have achieved savings all year round and our services have been delivered, may be not as quickly, but nevertheless we have not removed any services completely, nor closed down any of our buildings that provide the public with so much more than just bin emptying and street sweeping.

Partnership working and contacts with other agencies and outside bodies has provided opportunities for joint working and co-operation. The idea of a Combined Authority across Lancashire seems to be the start of a real attempt to work together to bring in inward investment, improve procurement and vitally to save money. The next Council will be in at the start of this.

Meeting with other authorities, the Lancaster University Vice Chancellor and the Lancaster MP, as well as other groups who care about our district, has been one of the most interesting part of being Leader.

This month's highlight was the Installation of the new Chancellor at Lancaster University. A fascinating ceremony. Good relationships with the University are beneficial to both organisations.

The regular meeting with the Chamber and the BID Group has been very valuable and has led to a better understanding and an exchange of ideas. I hope it continues.

Thank you to all Councillors of all parties for your work on behalf of our residents and I hope that the next four years brings health and happiness to you all.

4.0 Key Decisions

The following Officer Delegated (Key) Decisions were taken during this period:

- (1) Award of contract for the procurement of 10 vans
- (2) Corporate Non-Housing Year 2 Delivery Plan –Storey Building Gallery Roof – Phase 2
- (3) Corporate Non-Housing Year 2 Delivery Plan – Williamson Park Phase 2
- (4) Corporate Non-Housing Year 2 Delivery Plan – Lancaster Town Hall Electrical & Building Works