

Leader's Report

2 March 2016

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

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2016, later in this agenda.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There are no decisions to report since the last Leader's Report on 3rd February 2016.

3.0 Leader's Comments

On the 29 January I was pleased to attend a Mayoral occasion at Bowerham School. This was attended by our Veterans' Champion, Councillor Liz Scott, Lancaster Heritage Group and the British Legion, to honour a former pupil, James Leach, who attended the school in 1897. He and another soldier were awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery and a plaque was unveiled in his honour. The Mayor spoke to the children about why James Leach had won the award and we then talked to them about why they were on the School Council. I was very impressed by their self-confidence and their ease in explaining themselves. One of the most rewarding duties anyone could have.

The University Court took place on Saturday 30 January. It was pleasing to see that the University is in a healthy position, but they are not complacent because of the

probable decline in the number of overseas students as they are finding visas more difficult to acquire. Lancaster is one of the top universities and it is also in the top number for taking students from state schools. Our MP, Cat Smith, raised the need to improve individual voter registration.

Marketing Lancashire are planning to develop a Destination Management Plan for Lancaster and Morecambe Bay. This follows on from the destination branding work that has already been done. The work is being done in Lancaster first (at Marketing Lancashire's expense) because it is now one of eleven English Heritage Cities (along with York and Chester) which brings huge promotional opportunities. The city's profile is being raised across the UK and more recently, in Europe. Marketing Lancashire are really keen to seize the opportunity. They are working with us to set up a Destination Management Steering Group. This will include the two Universities, The Dukes, the Duchy, the Chamber of Commerce, Virgin Rail, Lancaster BID, Lancaster House Hotel, Leighton Hall and the County Council. I am very pleased that the private sector is getting involved as we need them to invest in the city. The full tourism potential of the city has yet to be realised. An officer and myself have been nominated and we will meet next month.

Excellent Information and Application packs for the recruitment of a Chief Executive have gone out and the closing date was the 12 February. We will be looking at the applications and scores and at the presentation of the recommended long list of candidates. The Chief Executive Recruitment Committee has met many times and continues its work. On the 17 February we met the advisor, who is herself a Chief Executive at South Cambridgeshire District Council and who has also worked in South Ribble. North West Employers are also advising us. The advertisement has been very successful and we will have a wide choice of applicants.

4.0 Other Matters

Cabinet minutes are attached at the end of this agenda

5.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 16th February 2016:

- (1) Budget & Policy Framework Update 2016/20
- (2) Treasury Management Strategy 2016/17
- (3) Corporate Fees & Charges
- (4) Emergency Call Centre – Community Alarms, Telecare and Associated Services
- (5) Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme

The following Officer Delegated Key Decision was taken during this period:

- (1) Corporate Non-Housing Delivery Plan - Storey Phase III

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2016.