

## **Leader's Report**

**13 July 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 28 June 2016, later in this agenda.

##### **2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently**

As required by Access to Information Procedure Rule 17 and Part 1 Section 7 (5.1) of the Constitution, set out below are details of a decision taken under the Urgent Business Procedure.

##### **Capacity Issues as a consequence of Senior Management Vacancies**

The Chief Executive consulted with the Leader of the Council to address the senior management vacancies. The reason for the urgency was that a decision was required prior to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

The decision is set out below:-

Option 1 was approved.

Retain the position as determined at Cabinet in August 2015 as Susan Parsonage, the incoming Chief Executive, will be in place in two months' time, before making any permanent changes. However at the same time address any shortfall in the

interim arrangements, namely there is a pressing need for an interim Legal Services Manager to manage the Legal Services Team and report into Preston City Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Should this option be pursued, the interim Manager would also be required to act as the Council's Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), taking on responsibility for information governance, which substantively is part of the Chief Officer (Governance)'s role. Overall, interim arrangements can be less robust than permanent arrangements. However, option 1, is not considered to be a high risk option given its temporary nature and with the additional measures being taken to increase capacity.

### **3.0 Leader's Comments**

The Interim Legal Services Manager is now in place.

On the 12 May I attended a Destination Management Conference at the University Conference Centre. This was a wider group of people who were all involved in Marketing or in Tourism for the district. We were grouped to discuss many questions, ideas, etc for improving and widening our tourism offer. These comments will now be fed back to the representatives of the management group. I sincerely hope that some useful proposals could emerge to put Lancaster on the national map.

On the 23 May a District Leaders' Forum was held in Preston Town Hall. This is a forum for District Leaders to discuss common problems and concerns and to raise questions before the afternoon meeting of Lancashire Leaders' at County Hall. Work plan priorities are on the agenda and of course, Combined Authority/Devolution Status and the idea the businesses are not fully aware of what these are. Waste collection and disposal are always on the agenda. Can we work together, is there still a value in all recycling etc and the costs to districts. Lancashire County Council building closures, City deals and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) need to have a clear steer from us about our vision for the future.

We then attended the Lancashire Leaders' meeting which updated us on progress towards a Combined Authority. An update on skills talked of local commissioning by Combined Authorities from providers and of capital investment in apprenticeships, careers advice and guidance. It was also seen as an opportunity better to integrate services and health systems as well as higher education participation in these things and our obligations to young people, 18 to 20 year olds, who are unemployed. The productivity gap in Lancashire is 29% to 32% nationally.

Better Homes for Lancashire was another item which recommended establishment of a Senior Officer Housing Steering Group. The council has submitted a bid for funding essential infrastructure to deliver housing growth at South Lancaster as part of the latest Growth Deal funding round (Growth Deal 3). If Lancashire is successful this could mean up to £50 million investment in Lancaster. Lancashire has already received £250 million in previous Growth Deal funds for Housing and Employment Growth around Preston.

The Lancashire Leaders' meeting on the 21 June included an item on Health Care and Integration with feedback on the Member Awareness Sessions. Ours was very

poorly attended, about six people, but it was useful to keep us informed about changes in Lancashire and South Cumbria Health Provision and delivery. Demand is growing and there is an £800 million gap ahead, therefore they must close that gap. Geography is a problem in our area and a small population in South Cumbria that is spread out. A reduction in social care by 2020/21 will be around 41%. The Unitary Leaders' want Local Government to take over, but District Leaders' are wary. The formal request to the Secretary of State to form a Combined Authority has been collated for submission. Once the Secretary of State is satisfied that a Combined Authority is appropriate for Lancashire, Leaders will be asked to place the Parliamentary Order in the Autumn.

This will run alongside some Devolution discussions. It was agreed that Sir Richard Leese be invited to a future meeting to share Manchester's experience. Lancashire MPs were invited by Councillor Mein, Councillor Blackburn and Edwin Booth, Chair of the LEP, to be updated on the Combined Authority; only 4 turned up and it was felt that their backing was needed and another meeting should be arranged. The concept of a Mayor for Lancashire did not receive a good reception. It was said that if we are even to consider Devolution in order to gain large amounts of fund, we need a Shire solution not a Metropolitan one. The different Elected Mayor Models were reported. Apparently, the Government insist on one person to negotiate with, therefore a Mayor. My view is that it is very early to even consider it and I was not alone but some are eager to be in "The Premier League".

Edwin Booth was at the meeting for the Growth Deal 3 update and the LEP is keen to work more closely with the emerging Combined Authority which should give us more information and more input.

The Museums Joint Steering Group met on the 24 May where we received an update on the implementation of County Council changes to the museums services by a verbal report from an officer. The County are receiving expressions of interest, but no decisions have yet been made. The 15 August is the deadline. A Cabinet Working Group has been set up to deal with Museums/Buses. There is a meeting on Lancaster with the Working Group on the 29 June. By the 08 September, the County Cabinet will know who the operators will be. The Maritime Museum's deep cleaning and drying out has now finished. It was hoped that it would reopen at the end of June, but ceiling work affects conservation and the warehouse is still closed. Lancashire County Council is seeking six months deferral to submit Phase 2 submissions for Accreditation for its own museums and ours as we have not yet signed a management agreement as there is no clarity about the future as yet.

Two historic vessels outside Lancaster Maritime Museum have been on display since 1985. Both are traditional "nobbie" vessels (Morecambe Bay Prawners). Both are now in a critical state despite valiant efforts to preserve them. In 2014 grant aid for the Museums Development North West enable the Museums Service to explore options for their future. After wide consultation and discussion, options were looked at. The Nobbie Owners' Association approached the Museums Service and they have submitted a project enquiry to the Heritage Lottery Fund. If successful, they will work on the boats with others, most probably at Liverpool Community College or Liverpool Maritime Museums. Apprentices will learn skills in traditional boat building and woodworking techniques in order to restore the vessels. Once restored they will return to the maritime or another public body, if it

was no longer appropriate for us to accommodate them. This will take around 3-4 years.

The Re-Launch of The Chamber evening was well attended on the 26 May. Edwin Booth and Susan Parsonage both spoke at the meeting. With the good news about Morecambe BID there is a renewed confidence in our area.

On the 02 June I attended the opening of the revamped Lancaster University Library. This is a fantastic improvement and it must be a great place to study. The CEO of the British Library was impressed by the new facilities which of course are newer than theirs.

#### **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 28 June 2016:

- (1) Review of Museums Service
- (2) Provisional Revenue, Capital and Treasury Management Outturn 2015/16

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

- (1) Electrical Inspections Ryelands and Carnforth
- (2) Pedestrian Wayfinding Commission for Central Morecambe
- (3) Branksome Phase 3 External Works
- (4) Installation of Smoke Alarms at Mainway and Newton
- (5) Supply of Plastic Fencing on Branksome
- (6) Ryelands House Boiler Replacement
- (7) Re-Roofing Kingsway and Trumacar
- (8) Supply of Liquid Fuel to White Lund Depot
- (9) Provision of Services for Stray Dogs and Kennelling

#### **Background Papers**

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016.