

Leader's Report

28 September 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 6 September 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 13 July 2016.

3.0 Leader's Comments

It seems a very long time since I attended a service at Blackburn Cathedral to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. It was held on the 12 June and I was pleased to be able to speak to the MP for Blackburn and to many other local representatives, including Harsha Shukla who was honoured by the Queen last year. The Mayor and Mayoress represented the council at the very imposing Cathedral and Councillor Hanson represented the County Council.

On the 20 June, Councillor Anne Whitehead and I attended a meeting of our shared Revenues and Benefits service with Preston. We were pleased to hear that this service, which has received outside commendations, is still working very well and provides substantial savings for both councils.

A meeting held at County Hall on the 21 June was attended by Edwin Booth, the Chair of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The agenda included items on Health and Care Integration and that this should be an agenda item for a future Combined Authority meeting. We received an update on progress of the Combined Authority. Devolution negotiation strategy discussions are running alongside the Combined Authority discussions and positive consultation has taken place. Lancashire is on track to formally form a Combined Authority by April 2017.

One of the purposes of the 11 July meeting was to elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Shadow Authority. Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of Blackpool Council, was elected Chair and Councillor Alastair Bradley of Chorley Council was elected a Vice-Chair. The Draft Constitution was agreed and the working relationship with the LEP was discussed and agreed. The intention is that the Combined Authority and the LEP will work together on key themes and governance arrangements. The key change, in terms of accountability, is the transfer of Transport for Lancashire to the Combined Authority. There was also an update on the Growth Deal and the intention to involve Lancashire MPs. I recently received a letter from Sajid Javid, the Minister for Local Authority Affairs, thanking Lancashire Leaders for our submission for a Combined Authority and one from Chris Grayling assuring us that the Northern Powerhouse is still in being.

On the 29 June, Councillor Darren Clifford and I met a County Working Group on Museums at which we gave notice of our withdrawal from the management agreement with County from next year and the County accepted the request.

A Destination Management meeting was held at The Storey on the 30 June at which we discussed the draft document that has been produced. The city council has proposed some amendments and the final document has not yet been produced.

The 30 June also marked the retirement of Mark Cullinan. This was a very well attended event with many sincere congratulations and expressions of thanks. On the 01 July I met with our new Chief Executive, Susan Parsonage, to welcome her to Lancaster and to talk about the future.

A meeting with representatives of the Canal Towpath Regeneration Group on the 07 July led to the Planning Service agreeing to meet with them soon in Lancaster to talk about improving the towpath and making it possible to cycle between Lancaster and Kendal with information signs and stop off points along the way to encourage rural tourism.

The new Leader of South Lakeland District Council and their Chief Executive came to meet our new Chief Executive and myself on the 07 September. We were asked if we wanted to contribute to research from Lancaster University into the economy round Morecambe Bay. Barrow are also taking part. We thought that it would be worthwhile. They asked about the Combined Authority and mayors. They are also concerned about the NHS Trust and its objectives. Of interest to us is their new "Customer Connect" Service which is a digital project IT programme that will work in the geographic area, not just from the Town Hall. It is starting now and is a four year investment. They gave us the name and promised to send information.

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 6 September 2016:

- (1) Coastal Communities Teams
 - (2) Bold Street Housing Regeneration – Preferred Development Partner
- The following Officer Delegated Key Decisions were taken during this period:

- (1) Contract for the Supply of Gas
- (2) The Platform Phase 2

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2016.