

Leader's Report

1 February 2017

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 December 2016 and 17 January 2017 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 14 December 2016.

3.0 Leader's Comments

At the Cabinet meeting on the 06 December 2016, the Cabinet agreed the development principles for Heysham Gateway as a guide for future Cabinet decisions affecting the area. Officers were authorised to incorporate these agreed principles into a joint marketing prospectus and to work with the other main stakeholders in promoting the area for high quality sustainable regeneration. They will be reporting back to us to obtain approval for any disposal. At the same meeting a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was approved to deal with issues such as street drinking and anti-social behaviour. The use of a PSPO will contribute to a number of the Council's priorities and officers will report to the Community Safety Partnership and to Overview and Scrutiny.

In line with the timetable, work has begun on the Budget Strategy, so that for the Cabinet meeting in January, Cabinet could determine its draft budget proposals for 2017/18 onwards.

Approval was also given for the Council's participation in a bid for European Structural and Investment Funds to be made by Lancashire Sport and for the council to act as a "cluster lead" to support the More Positive Together tackling worklessness project with social housing.

On the 13 December, the Deputy Leader and I met with a member of the Lancaster Grand Theatre Board to discuss some concerns about Canal Corridor. We assured him of support and we also received an overview of the proposals for the site.

On the 15 December I met Professor Julie Mennell, the new leader of the University of Cumbria. As it is also in my ward, it was a useful exchange of ideas about their plans and about general issues in the ward. We are lucky to have two universities in Lancaster that provide so much to our local economy.

Councillor Hanson, the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning), and I went to visit Barrow Council on the 16 December. This was a meeting to discuss the National Grid proposals and other common problems. It was agreed that the Barrow MP, John Woodcock, would facilitate a meeting in London with ministers to discuss the plans with officers from the two towns.

On the 19 December, I attended a District Leaders' meeting at Preston Town Hall followed by a Shadow Combined Authority meeting at County Hall. The District Leaders' are most concerned about the government's proposal to remove money from the New Homes Bonus to support Social Care. The question of how Business Rates will be split in future between districts and counties was raised. A discussion on the requirements of devolution took place. The second meeting presented various reports and updates on progress on the five themes and there was a Price Waterhouse Cooper presentation for a Public Service Model for Lancashire.

On the 20 December the Chief Executive and I met Professor Andrew Atherton at the University of Lancaster. He was keen to discuss a proposal that has come forward for the area and we will be meeting the proposers in January to discuss it further.

I am very pleased to read the retailers' comments on Christmas Trade in Lancaster. It was very upbeat and encouraging. Best of all was the local enthusiasm for the "Garden Village" success. This has been very well received in the *Lancaster Guardian* as a "game-changer for our area", and "an exciting opportunity" from the University. It will provide some financial support which will initially pay for a new Project Officer and much more. I think we should all congratulate the Planning Team who made this possible.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

4.0 Other Matters

Cabinet minutes for 6 December 2016 and 17 January 2017 are attached at the end of this agenda.

5.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 6 December 2016:

- (1) Heysham Gateway
- (2) Lancaster City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order 2016
- (3) Service Review – Council Housing
- (4) Lancashire ESIF Project – More Positive Together

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 17 January 2017:

- (1) St Leonard's House
- (2) Budget and Policy Framework Update 2017 to 2021 – General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme
- (3) Budget and Policy Framework Update 2017 to 2021 – Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme

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

- (1) Lancaster City Council's Approach to Responding to Dangerous Buildings
- (2) Renewal of Railings, Concrete Repairs and Asbestos Removal – Gaskell & Wordsworth House
- (3) Morecambe Area Action Plan
- (4) Assembly Rooms Phase 2

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meetings held on 6 December 2016 and 17 January 2017.