

Lancaster City Council

End of Year Review (2016 – 2017)



LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Corporate Plan 2016 -2020

Our Corporate Plan 2016 -2020 sets out *Our Core Purpose* and *Our Vision* for the district and the priorities that we will focus on between 2016 -2020. Our Corporate Plan sets the direction for the delivery of our services and together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and other strategies drives the allocation of resources as part of the council's Policy Framework.

Our Vision is for:

'A sustainable, self-contained and varied group of communities with a population remaining in balance to support its local economy, comprising:

- **Morecambe and Heysham** –a confident community with a regenerated living, working and leisure environment, acting as a focal point on Morecambe Bay to enjoy and interact with the wider landscape
- **Lancaster** – a prosperous historic city with a thriving knowledge economy
- **Carnforth** – a successful market town and service centre for North Lancashire and South Cumbria
- **Coast and Countryside** – a conserved, enhanced and diversified environment with a network of vibrant rural communities which will lead the North West in its quality of life and environmental and design standard and within which sustainable housing, economic and retail development to meet local needs will be supported

Our Corporate Plan reflects the changing needs and aspirations of local communities and the shifting priorities, opportunities and challenges that we face. We know that Central Government funding will reduce even further, and that changes in population will mean that demand for some services will increase and customer expectation will change. Given the rapidly changing environment we are operating in we review our plan each year to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs of our district.

To ensure that **we are a council that is fit for the future** we need to continue to find new ways to deliver our services, adopt different approaches to using our resources, work collaboratively with our partners and influence more organisations and individuals to help achieve what we know are the most important priorities and outcomes for our district and our communities. Our priorities, set out in the Corporate Plan 2016 -2020 are:

- **Community Leadership**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Clean and Green Places**
- **Sustainable Economic Growth**

We are committed to providing high quality services to residents and businesses that deliver value for money. Throughout the year we monitor our overall performance of the key activities we aim to deliver to drive forward our priorities. This document is part of that process, setting out our achievements in the last year (2016 -2017) towards the delivery of the key outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan 2016 -2020.

Priority: Community Leadership



What we did in 2016 -2017

We faced up to the challenges presented by the current economic climate by placing an increased emphasis on the things that matter most to people of the district and by rationalising and developing our service delivery and use of resources. As a community leader we worked collaboratively with other public services, businesses, organisations and local community groups to deliver efficient services and to take pride in, and make a positive impact on, our communities and the wider district.

Outcome: Communities are brought together and the major issues affecting the district are addressed through working in partnership

Showed our support to Syrian refugees: We worked with local authorities across Lancashire to develop a resettlement programme that will see 500 Syrian refugees resettled across the county over the next five years. The Council made plans to welcome 10 refugee families into the district in summer 2017 with financial support from central government.

Successful Coastal Community Team bid: We made a successful bid to form a 'Coastal Community Team' (CCT) charged with drawing up economic plans to create jobs and regenerate seaside resorts. Known as 'Promenade to Port' CCT this will see the council working in partnership with Lancashire County Council, Town and Parish Council's, business groups and volunteers. This opportunity will help improve the fortunes of Morecambe and Heysham, whilst other parts of the district and coastline will benefit from the new Morecambe Bay Partnership CCT which also received funding.

Took steps to tackle anti-social behaviour: We introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in the city centre, giving the Police new powers to stop people drinking alcohol on the streets and to crackdown on related anti-social behaviour which has been on the increase in recent years. This action sends out a clear message that this type of behaviour is unacceptable. We are establishing a new anti-social behaviour team to work alongside Lancashire Police to address anti-social behaviour at an early stage.

Condemned hate crime: We condemned hate crimes of any description following an increase in incidents within the district after the EU referendum and made a firm commitment to continue working with the Community Safety Partnership, Lancashire County Council and Town and Parish councils to challenge such behaviour and prevent these crimes. We encouraged anyone witnessing hate crime to report it anonymously at www.istreetwatch.co.uk so that racist and xenophobic harassment in public spaces can be tracked and incidents made visible to the wider community

Outcome: Well run, value-for-money services that are valued by the public and demonstrate good governance, openness and transparency

Encouraged electronic voter registration and presided over a number of elections: We encouraged our residents to take advantage of the National Voter Registration Drive and to go online to register to vote. We administered and managed a number of polls, including the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire; five city and county by-elections and the EU referendum. More than 100,000 people were eligible to vote on the EU referendum which needed 105 polling stations and 267 polling station staff to make the day go smoothly!

Sought views on a Community Governance Review: We sought people's views - known as a Community Governance Review – on the proposed creation of a new parish council spanning parts of the Marsh and Scotforth West Wards of the city council, called Aldcliffe-with-Stodday Parish Council. In all we provide support to 38 town, parish and neighbourhood councils across the district.

Outcome: Well run, value-for-money services that are valued by the public and demonstrate good governance, openness and transparency (continued)

Invited scrutiny of our decisions and services: We believe that scrutiny is an important element of our local democracy, existing to hold decision-makers to account and to ensure that issues of concern to local residents and visitors are considered, so we actively invited people to raise issues affecting them or their communities that they would like the council to look into, whether it be a problem in the local area, a council service, or an issue where the council might take a lead to make real improvements to the lives of our residents.

Provided job opportunities for young people: We took on four new apprentices. All of them passed a nationally recognised qualification and achieved permanent roles at the council. Our apprenticeship programme provides on-the-job learning and development to young people and an opportunity to gain valuable experience working alongside our skilled workforce. The programme is a fantastic example of how much we value young adults and want to invest in their future, whilst also ensuring that we have a regular flow of new ideas and ways of working. This will continue into 2017/18 with a further eight individuals due to complete their apprenticeships during the year.

Consulted on the council tax support scheme: We asked residents for their views on the district's council tax support scheme which provides help for people on low incomes. Following consultation we resolved to continue with 100% support for eligible claimants.

Outcome: Establish and implement the council's wider plans for 'digital' to understand and meet the changing needs of our communities

Introduced a new look website: We made big changes to our website, giving it a new look seeking to make it easier and quicker for our residents, businesses and visitors to find the information they need. The site provides a simple-to-use and easy-to-read experience, no matter what device is used. We have also made improvements to make it easy and convenient to access a wide range of services online and to provide a more efficient service for customers who prefer to phone us or call in person. During the year pages on our website were visited 2,727,099 times with nearly 2 million being unique hits! 44% of users visit our website using their laptop or PC and 41% using their smartphone, with the remainder visiting using a tablet.

Developed and launched our iLancaster App: Working with the University of Lancaster we launched an innovative new mobile app, called iLancaster, and made free Wi-Fi access 'hotspots' available, making it easier than ever before for residents, businesses and visitors to get the information they want about the Lancaster district whilst on the move. Our iLancaster app delivers a wide range of interactive services, local information, events listings and alerts direct to smartphones and mobile devices. In its first year, 29,000 people have signed up to the App and there are around 10,000 active users each month.

Outcome: Maintain a financially stable position and strong financial forecast for the delivery of services

Balanced the budget and made plans for a financially stable future: We decided to increase our portion of Council Tax by around 10p a week to help to balance our budget in 2017/18 and to protect services in the short term. The long term financial outlook means that by 2020/21 an additional £2.3million will need to be saved each year due to further Government cuts. To help us bridge the financial gap we have had to make some difficult decisions and plan for some changes to the way that we deliver our services. This includes a series of major reviews to look at how we can work more efficiently and effectively. We also invested in the longer term future of the district, notably through the £5m scheme to improve facilities, make savings and increasing income at the Salt Ayre Leisure Centre. We have other plans to exploit opportunities arising from the opening of the Bay Gateway that will boost the local economy, promote inward investment and encourage more businesses to the district.

Priority: Health and Wellbeing



What we did in 2016 - 2017

We carried out a range of actions to support the positive health and wellbeing of our residents, including maintaining the high standards and efficiency of council houses, supporting housing renewal and improving standards in the private rented sector. We took the lead and worked in partnership to improve health outcomes through: access to sports and leisure activities, keeping vulnerable people warm in their homes, tackling homelessness and rough sleeping and delivering a variety of health functions in our communities, including environmental protection, food safety, a dog warden and pest control service, cemeteries, home improvement and civil contingency services.

Outcome: Enhanced quality of life of local residents through access to affordable, decent housing

Helped people find affordable homes: With new social housing developments in Lancaster and Morecambe we encouraged and supported anyone looking for an affordable home to find out about properties that they may be eligible to apply for through our Ideal Choice Homes Scheme. The scheme pulls together all available accommodation belonging to registered housing providers as well as our own housing stock, making it easier for people to access properties that meet their needs. Properties are available to people who do not own their own home, have a connection to the district by living or working here for three years or have close family who have lived in the district for five years or more. Some new build properties were prioritised for applicants in employment. In 2016/17, we rehoused 345 applicants into our Council houses and nominated another 207 housing applicants to Private Registered Providers of Social Housing. Of these, 90 were found accommodation in new build properties in Lancaster, Morecambe, Arkholme and Bolton-le-Sands.

Awarded for our the services we provide: Our Home Improvement Agency (HIA) scooped a prestigious national award as the Home Adaptations Service of the Year in recognition of the quality of work it provides. The award was for work undertaken in delivering disabled adaptations for residents in their own homes, reducing waiting times for disabled facilities grants, promoting awareness of available grants and offering clients access to a wide range of services. The award highlights the valuable contribution of the HIA in providing support to the most vulnerable in the community, being very much on the frontline of ongoing efforts nationally to join up health, housing and social care and to enable people to live healthy, independent lives. During the year, we issued 190 grants for disabled facilities and adaptations and improved 2,077 private tenant and owner occupied homes. A further 342 homes benefited from our Warm Homes Initiative.

Outcome: Health and wellbeing of our citizens is improved

Invested in the future of resident's health and the Salt Ayre Leisure Centre plans: The aim of our £5 million pound investment in the redevelopment of Salt Ayre Leisure Centre was to improve facilities at the Centre and create a 'community hub' providing accessible sport and leisure facilities to the local community. Construction work started last May when the centre's sports hall made way for a new three storey adventure play area, called 'Energy', with extensive soft play area features slides and obstacles for children to enjoy, and a 'clip and climb' facility, known as 'X-height', boasting 18 different climbing panels with varying levels of difficulty offering a fun and challenging experience for all the family. Since opening *Energy* and *X-height* have attracted 5,308 and 18,730 visitors respectively. Since then the development has added a fitness suite with 100 stations, an immersive spinning studio and Europe's first ever Flight Tower, called 'Gravity', which was launched in February 2016. *Gravity*, measures over 60ft and is a multi-level outdoor tower and epic adventure installation offering various ways of descending including abseil, zip-line or free fall, known as The Drop! By the end of March 2016, *Gravity* had already attracted 189 visitors. The final phase to be completed by the summer, will include refurbished changing rooms, a luxurious spa facility and a multi-functional training room.

The income streams for almost all of the Leisure Centres activities are already ahead of target. The cost of the redevelopment will be offset by increased income and reduced costs in other areas that will see the investment paid back within 12 years whilst creating a premier sport and leisure facility that meets demand and provides a facility to enjoy and lead a healthy lifestyle.

Reviewed management of Community Swimming Pools: Since April, work has progressed with the support of Sport England funded consultants to assist a community asset transfer of the pools to either local schools or community interest groups. The discussions to transfer Heysham pool to Heysham school is progressing well and it is anticipated this will happen in autumn 2017. A community led interest group is still progressing taking on of Hornby pool. In both these cases, we understand that Lancashire County Council will continue to support the asset transfer process when it takes back the pools on 30 September 2017. Carnforth pool will continue to be operated by the city council until 31 December 2017 when it is anticipated that it will transfer to a community interest group led by the parish council.

Offered a free workshop for flood affected businesses: We provided support and help to businesses affected by Storm Desmond by working with partners to provide free workshops aimed at helping them to be more resilient to the risks posed by events of severe weather conditions both now and in the future.

Supported community contingency plans: We also hosted special meetings and worked with our partners to provide support to local community groups to help them to plan and prepare for future emergencies. With our help several groups made successful bids to the Community Foundation for Lancashire, getting funding to help them develop robust contingency plans; improve the resilience of local community centres; engage willing volunteers and equip local emergency centres. This initiative is set to continue with the aim of building a network of resilient communities in the rural and urban areas of the district.

Helped the Homeless and urged residents to help bring rough sleepers out of the cold: We promoted and encouraged our residents to use a National online service dedicated to the homeless, called StreetLink, as the most effective way of alerting specialist services and ourselves to someone who may be in desperate need of help, whatever the time of day or night. We have a committed team of staff who are on standby 24/7 to offer on the spot support and advice and to make arrangements to get them off the street and into temporary accommodation. Our work helps to maintain a commitment to ensure that 'no-one spends a second night out on the street' and helps to mitigate them becoming a victim of crime or developing drug or alcohol problems whilst also reducing ill-health. During 2016/17, we helped 73 individuals find suitable accommodation. Three people were sleeping rough as at 31 March 2017.

Enforced standards of food safety: We took strong action against business who failed to meet food safety standards, prosecuting and fining those who fell below these standards. Prosecutions send a strong message to food businesses that they must take food hygiene and safety seriously but we also work proactively with local food businesses to help them to improve and maintain standards, with 88% of them reaching a broadly compliant standard for food safety (Food Hygiene Rating of 4 or above) at the end of 2016/17.

Supported responsible dog owners and prosecuted others: We offered free sessions to dog owners following new legislation making it compulsory for all dogs to be micro chipped. We microchipped over 300 dogs, saving their owners from paying a hefty £500 fine for failing to do so. The compulsory micro chipping of dogs marks a step forward in dog welfare and helps our dog warden service to reduce the time and cost of reuniting owners with their pets. Where necessary we prosecuted and fined residents who failed to comply with dog control orders on issues such as dog fouling and dogs being out of control in public places. Dog fouling will continue to be tackled in 2017/18 through our newly formed Anti-Social- Behaviour team.

Lit up the Ashton Memorial to shine a light on good causes: We illuminated our magnificent Ashton Memorial with a rainbow of colours throughout the year to raise awareness of illnesses and diseases that have an impact on countless people's lives including World Sepsis Day; World Mental Health Day, World Osteoporosis Day and in support of children suffering from cancer.

Priority: Clean and Green Places



What we did in 2016 -2017

We built upon our reputation of being a 'clean and green' district with much to offer. We maintained and operated our parks, recreation grounds and open spaces and encouraged and supported community groups and individuals to take pride in their local area and to be actively involved in protecting what we have in a sustainable way. We provided cleansing services to a high standard on our streets and public toilets as well as Morecambe Promenade and on our beaches. We dealt with litter, fly-tipping, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and provided a fortnightly waste collection service for every household in the district as well as a six day collection of commercial waste, where viable to do so. We delivered our services in an environmentally friendly way and introduced activities and functions to generate income and be more efficient.

Outcome: The impact on the environment from council operations and services will be minimised

Retained the Market Square trees: We listened to what the public had to say and retained the trees in Market Square, looking instead at innovative ways of cleaning the new surfacing around the trees and reducing the risk of people slipping due to the 'honeydew' (a sugar rich sticky liquid) being secreted onto the surfacing. We continue to trial different cleansing methods and products and carry out research into best practice to find an appropriate and affordable solution.

Maintained weed spraying: We worked with Lancashire County Council to find a workable solution that would enable us to continue weed spraying across the district. To do this we made some operational changes and supported local community groups and utilised Community Payback in clean ups.

Introduced an opt-in service for the collection of green waste: We introduced a subscription only service for the collection of garden waste from households in the district following the loss of funding that will see the cost of collecting household waste rise from £2.85million to £4.14 million over the next few years. From the beginning of January 2017, we offered a discounted rate for a maximum of 15 months to anyone opting-in to the service by March 31st 2017 with the charge rising from £30 to £37.50 after that date. The charge, whilst entirely discretionary, will help us to close the funding gap and enable us to continue providing this service which is clearly valued across the district with around 21,000 people signing up to the service by the end of March. Registration can be done online or by telephone. Anyone not wanting to opt-in to the service can dispose of their garden waste for free at one of the Household Waste and Recycling Centres or through home composting.

Took to the road to promote recycling: We carried out a series of roadshows to offer information, advice and top tips on how everyone can do their bit to reduce, reuse or recycle as much waste as possible, helping us to maintain our position as one of the best districts in the North West for recycling household waste. In 2015 we recycled 45% of waste. During 2016/17 we collected 351kg of household waste per 1,000 population; 879 tonnes of recyclable waste and 3,410 tonnes of commercial waste.

Outcome: The impact on the environment from council operations and services will be minimised (continued)

Enforced penalties of those causing litter problems: We took action on those who deliberately dropped litter in the street or illegally dumped waste by carrying out thorough investigations to gather evidence, issuing of fixed penalty notices and, where necessary, pursuing offenders through the courts to send out a strong message that we will do whatever it takes to ensure that our district is a clean and healthy environment. In addition to daily removal of fly tips in 2016/17 we took further action in relation to 3,530 incidents of fly-tipping and issued a further 491 notices for other waste related offences.

Maintained beaches that are among the best in the UK: We maintained our principal beaches - Morecambe's North (Clock Tower) and South (Stone Jetty to the Battery) - to a high standard with both being recognised as amongst the best in the UK as part of the *LovemyBeach* campaign and passing strict water quality standards set by the Environment Agency. *Keep Britain Tidy* also awarded us for our standards in beach management and offering visitors great facilities alongside a litter free and safe environment. The quality of our beaches means they can be enjoyed all year round by residents and visitors.

Started a review of our commercial fleet management and usage: We commenced work on reviewing the management and use of our commercial vehicles and related working practices to improve efficiency in the delivery of our services, whilst maintaining the quality. We expect to make optimum use of our fleet, make savings that can be utilised to maintain services and reduce the impact on the environment. Our transport operations and maintenance costs perform well in a number of areas compared to other local authorities and in 2016/17 we used 486,913 litres of diesel – a 4.38% reduction on the previous year.

Outcome: Local communities are clean and residents have a sense of pride in the district

Opened brand new play areas: We developed and opened a brand new play area on Morecambe seafront, next to the Clock Tower, and two others at Williamson Park. The play area located on Morecambe promenade features contemporary and innovative equipment with a climbing dome and stainless steel tubes designed to give kids a fun but challenging experience and opportunities to express themselves. Tens of thousands of children have used the play area since it was installed, with many praising the innovative design. The new play area is part the 'Connecting Eric' project, which aims to make better use of the land between the Clock Tower toilets and Northumberland Street with new benches being installed made from some of the old promenade storm boards that are no longer required. At Williamson Park our new play areas were developed through working with volunteers from the Friends group and now cater for older children (8 years and over) as well as our younger visitors in a safe environment. We also carried out significant grounds work to improve drainage and the footpaths and landscaping, and introduced nine African meerkats into the Animal Garden! This work backs up the parks reputation as one of the best in the North West attracting over a hundred thousand visitors each year.

Awarded 'Green Flag' status for our parks: Williamson Park and Happy Mount Park – two of the five main parks that we operate and maintain - were presented with the coveted 'Green Flag' award. This national award recognises and rewards the best parks and open spaces across the country and sets them out as being parks that boast the highest possible standards, are beautifully maintained and offer excellent facilities. For the fourth year running, Williamson Park was also awarded 'Green Heritage' status which recognises its historical and cultural interest. We also work closely with Friends groups at all five of our main parks and at three others, all of whom help us to maintain our parks to a very high standard, for the enjoyment and benefit of the whole community.

Refurbished listed buildings in Williamson Park: We carried out internal refurbishments to the inner dome of the Grade I Ashton Memorial and internal repairs and restoration to the roof of the Grade II listed Butterfly House to enhance the publics continued use and enjoyment of these two great buildings.

Established a 'masterplan' for Happy Mount Park: We worked with the Friends of Happy Mount Park and other volunteers with specialist knowledge and expertise to develop a masterplan for the park, setting out an action plan for its ongoing management and development and fundraising options to help maintain its high standards and reputation as one of our most popular attractions for the next 20-30 years, attracting tens of thousands of visitors every year.

Offered our flower beds for adoption: We gave individuals, businesses and community groups the opportunity to adopt a flower bed from a choice of available sites in Lancaster and Morecambe, as part of our ideas to minimise costs. The scheme was very popular with the contribution from each sponsor helping us maintain some of our most popular public spaces. Their generosity was marked by a plaque placed in their adopted flower bed. .



What we did in 2016 - 2017

We continued to work closely with strategic partners and businesses to capitalise on the district's exceptional opportunities and its outstanding arts and cultural heritage and entertainment offer, as well as our beautiful coastline and natural landscapes. The main prospects for economic growth relate to skills retention; the energy sector; the knowledge sector and the visitor economy but we face a pressing demographic need to secure these economic benefits through new jobs and business growth. We are working hard to improve the attractiveness of central Morecambe and to develop the retail offer of Lancaster City Centre and to enhance enjoyment and pride in its heritage assets. We facilitate festivals and events to provide economic stimulus needed to help local businesses and in our rural areas we are focussing on the natural environment to build on their tourism appeal. In 2016, the Lancaster district was officially named as one of the 10 best places to live in the UK! This was based on data from the Office of National Statistics and the census, and statistics from surveys on key lifestyle factors, taking into account affordability of housing, jobs, business, wellbeing, culture and family life.

Outcome: Sustainable economic growth and jobs will be created in key sectors including energy, knowledge, health and the visitor economy

Consulted on the district's draft Local Plan: We launched a major consultation on a draft Local Plan aimed at shaping the future of the district over the next 20 years. Public consultation on the draft Local Plan ended in March 2017. As part of the consultation we organised a series of events across the district where anyone interested in knowing more about the plan was able to speak to council officers about any impacts that the Local Plan could have on their area. More than 1,500 people attended the 15 events to ask questions and view the Local Plan documents and supporting evidence and map. The Local Plan identifies which areas will be allocated to create employment and develop new housing to accommodate an anticipated growth in population and jobs. The areas identified are suitable, available and achievable sites to meet Government requirements to contribute to the increasing national shortfall of housing by identifying enough land for around 13,000 new homes and potentially 9,500 jobs. Once adopted, the Local Plan will set the council's strategy for development in the district up to at least 2031.

Supported consultation on neighbourhood plan applications: We provided advice and support to parish councils on the submission and public consultation of four neighbourhood planning applications submitted during the year. These applications can include development of new homes, shops and offices and, subject to an independent examination and community referendum, will be used in helping to make decisions on future planning applications in the designated area as part of the adopted Local Plan. It was encouraging that many of our communities are taking this opportunity to shape their local area.

Consulted on the Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) Development Plan: We worked with South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) and local town and parish councils to produce a dedicated Development Plan for the Arnsdale and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The plan gives residents an opportunity to comment on sites for new housing and employment that will meet local needs and create vibrant, diverse and sustainable communities; maintain a thriving local economy and, protect, conserve and enhance the landscape, wildlife, geology and heritage of the area. The AONB plan is now incorporated within the Lancaster and South Lakeland Local Plans.

Outcome: Sustainable economic growth and jobs will be created in key sectors including energy, knowledge, health and the visitor economy (continued)

Made a successful bid for a 'garden village': We were chosen by the Government as one of the first in a new wave of 'garden villages' with our proposals for the development of 3,500 homes in the Bailrigg area that will create a new settlement with its own distinct character. High quality design, communal facilities and well-maintained community green space will bring people together and forge a true community spirit that will benefit from sustainable travel connections through public transport and cycling. The next stage is for us to work with local communities and land owners to undertake a sophisticated planning exercise to shape proposals and design the key infrastructure. Lancaster University will be a key partner in the delivery of the plans.

Continued work on the regeneration of Morecambe: Following a series of consultations we continued work on regenerating Morecambe through the implementation of the Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) that will improve the town centre for businesses, residents and visitors. Works took place to pedestrianise Morecambe town centre including new paving, lighting and street furniture on a section of Euston Road and a new Town Square. The works were undertaken by Lancashire County Council's Highways who jointly funded the work with the aim of improving the tired appearance of the centre and to make it a much nicer place for people to visit and to spend time. There was also work on improving the area around Victoria Street with the aim of better connecting the town centre and seafront and increasing footfall to benefit businesses and trading. Other work saw the creation of a new play area on the promenade and installation of a new zebra crossing to make it easier for people to move between the seafront and the town centre. The well-known Morecambe Mosaic, formerly sited outside the Arndale Centre on Euston Road, was moved and given a new prominent setting on the seafront near to the RNLI lifeboat station.

Progressed work on the Morecambe Wave Reflection Wall: We progressed replacement of the sea wall, a £10million project to protect the town from the effects of coastal flooding. The construction incorporates a new 'up and over' feature along the length of the wall to create greater all year round access to the promenade together with viewing platforms from which to enjoy the surrounding bay. Of course, the wall will also significantly reduce the risk of flooding to large parts of Morecambe! Other features of the new wall include the integration of nearby street names and patterns inspired by the area, along with new surfacing, seating and lighting.

Lancashire Combined Authority: Following public consultation we agreed to join other councils across the county in setting up a Combined Authority for Lancashire. Joint work is ongoing and subject to Government approval the Combined Authority will be a legal body that enables councils to work as one around key areas of economic development, regeneration and transport. This will help to secure more investment and jobs for the county, whilst allowing each council to retain responsibility for the services it provides

Outcome: The attractiveness and offer of the district as a place to visit or invest in will be improved

Supported proposals to make Morecambe town centre a Business Improvement District: We worked with the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce to develop and support businesses in a proposal to make Morecambe Town Centre a Business Improvement District (BID). Morecambe businesses voted 'yes' to the Business Improvement District (BID). This means that the local business community will be investing an extra £630,000 in Morecambe over a five-year period through an additional levy on their business rates that will be used to complement the work we are undertaking through the Morecambe Area Action Plan. We will continue to work very closely with the business community to create a more prosperous place to live, shop, work and visit.

Offered new opportunities to market traders: We offered a number of investment opportunities for new business and existing market traders through a range of fixed term free and discounted rates for pitches and stalls at our Lancaster Market and Assembly Rooms in the centre of the city and the Festival Market in Morecambe, as well as the outdoor Charter Market in Lancaster. We also refurbished the Assembly Rooms, located in a 18th century building Grade II listed buildings and created a Vintage Corner at the Festival Market dedicated to the sale of vintage wear, accessories and other items.

Became part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park: We became part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park when Leck Fell, an area in the district of special scientific interest, formed part of an extension programme for the National Park since its designation. Having a seat on the National Park's governing body enables us to play a major role in developing its Management Plan that will enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and, promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of new areas in Lancashire and Cumbria

Outcome: The attractiveness and offer of the district as a place to visit or invest in will be improved (continued)

Celebrated our rich heritage: We exploited Lancaster's newly designated status as one of Visit England's Heritage Cities by ensuring that our rich heritage is a key ingredient of our tourism strategy. We encouraged more of the district's 1,300 listed buildings and venues to take part in England's biggest heritage festival celebrating history, architecture and culture and offering people the chance to explore hidden places and buildings of every age, style and functions. We also made use of available funding to work with Lancashire County Council on an archaeological excavation on Castle Hill in Lancaster. Completely done by hand the excavation sought to uncover more about the city's Roman past as part of our Beyond the Castle project. As well as the districts' listed buildings there are 38 conservation and the same number of monuments and we provided a series of free workshops to help people to improve their heritage skills and gain a practical understanding of some traditional skills and methods including stone carving, decorative plasterwork and lime plastering and pointing.

Outcome: Lancaster and Morecambe Bay will be recognised as important visitor destinations

Secured funding to restore Morecambe's Bay Arena: We secured £50,000 to give a new lease of life to The Bay Arena located in the headland area of Morecambe's seafront. We plan to turn the former lido into an Art Park creating a venue for festivals, arts and leisure and culture that will increase visitors and spending in the local area. We hope this will be the first of a series of transformational projects that will add to the vitality of the Central Promenade.

Supported and invested in major local events: We took a decision to continue to invest in, and generate additional income from, a diverse events programme across the district and to continue to support the *Vintage by the Sea* and the *Light Up Lancaster* events. *Vintage by the Sea* returned to Morecambe for the fourth season celebrating 20th century design. Once again the event brought a vibrancy and creativity to Morecambe's Promenade with vintage music, fashion, vehicles, entertainment and much more. Unfortunately, the bad weather (September 2016) had a negative impact on visitor numbers with 29,000 local residents and visitors attending the events (40,000 in 2015/16), although the increased spend provides an economic boost to businesses and the local economy. *Light up Lancaster* brought a range of cultural events across the city. This annual festival saw over 28,000 visitors take to the streets for a magical city-wide experience including an illuminated art trail, artworks and installations illuminating historic buildings, squares, parks and monuments across the city. Once again the event culminated in a spectacular fireworks display with an array of amazing fireworks launched from the top of Lancaster Castle. The economic impact of the event on the local economy was estimated to be nearly £411,000. These events were made possible with the support of our partners and many other supporters across the district who do so much to make the district a lively and attractive place for residents and visitors and are crucial to the regeneration of the district and the local economy. Both of these event showcase the district's greatest attributes and help to establish the area as a great place for hosting top events.

Commissioned a new report on future museum provision: We considered a report presenting ideas for a complete redesign of the city council's museums. This included a radical revamp of the City Museum as the central hub of a new and reinvigorated museums service that can provide an enhanced cultural, retail and catering offer and much improved public access alongside frequently refreshed collections and exhibitions. We have asked for more detailed work on the options, taking the opportunity to re-invent the museums service to ensure it remains relevant, fit for purpose and excites and encourages future generations to connect with our heritage.