



Leader's Report

14 November 2018

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There are no decisions to report since the last Leader's Report on 26 September 2018.

2.0 Leader's Comments

Lancashire Leaders, 11 September 2018

At the Lancashire Leaders meeting on 11 September a presentation was made on Community Banking. Councillor Matthew Brown, the Leader of Preston City Council, introduced it along with two Directors.

We were told that the UK has one of the world's most concentrated banking systems, with the market dominated by only four big UK High Street banks and the Spanish owned Santander. There is much greater diversity in other parts of Europe and in the US.

Regional banks in many countries were lending throughout the recession. They are customer owned and designed to meet local citizen and business banking and investment needs. Other council areas deliver community banking based on a similar model, providing economic and social benefits. Councillor Brown will carry out further work on this and report back.

Eden North, 4 October 2018

A meeting regarding the Eden North project took place at the University on 4 October. Representatives of the University, Edwin Booth (the Chair of Lancashire Enterprise Partnership) and ourselves were present, along with the County Council via telephone link.

We discussed who to lobby regarding the project and its funding and the best approach to this; we will be writing to Jake Berry (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Northern Powerhouse) and others urging them to champion the project. Lord Inglewood, Chair of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, is interested as are our partners in South Lakeland District Council and Barrow Borough Council.

A meeting on 19 November of the Lancaster and District Transport Group will discuss the transport implications of the project, and a separate transport study is also required.

Discussions also took place around setting up a working capital fund, and the importance of a strategic Planning Document to encourage investment. We will be talking to the Eden Project in November about investment and wider sources of investment will be sought, e.g. ESIF, Local Enterprise Partnership and private funding.

Sir Tim Smit, founder of the Eden Project, will be making a presentation to councillors on Friday 16 November.

The briefing of the role of a Local Authority Trading Company gave councillors further specific information on its application to Salt Ayre Leisure Centre. Many useful questions were asked and answered but no decisions will be made until the business case has been fully appraised.

We met with South Lakeland District Council and Barrow Borough Council regarding the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region on 10 August. We reviewed the Business Prospectus and discussed where it would be marketed and how. A launch will take place in the near future.

Concern about HS2 not stopping at Lancaster has been expressed and a letter from the County Council confirms that they will continue to make the case for Lancashire through representation on a number of Transport for the North's technical workshop groups. We are making our case strongly in partnership with other bodies, such as the Universities, and businesses to support the campaign.

On the afternoon of 10 October I attended the 'Celebrating Success Awards'. It was even better than last year. The organisation of the event was superb and I thank all who made it happen and created such a wonderful atmosphere. I hope that you all received accounts of the award winners and also the runners up, who were so good that it must have been a difficult task to choose the winners.

The Confucius Institute at the University held a reception for visiting Chinese Artists. The Mayor was present and we were privileged to meet the artists and see their work. They value the link with the city and have presented me with a picture from the International Artist Wong Ying, which is to be hung in Lancaster Town Hall.

The formal opening of the Morecambe Wave Reflection Wall took place at the Midland Hotel on 19 October. Theresa Coffey MP, the Environment Minister, came to cut the ribbon. The video of the wall and promenade from above was wonderful. It was such a good advert for Morecambe. I hope you can all see it.

The Draft Budget and Planning Timetable 2019/20 begins on November 6 with a Cabinet meeting. I know that all parties will have an opportunity to contribute ideas and I hope that you will.

3.0 Key Decisions

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

- (1) Electoral Printing and Graphic Services.
- (2) Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme.