



Leader's Report

19 December 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 Cabinet

Information on Cabinet matters are provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 6 November 2018 and 4 December 2018 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 November 2018.

3.0 Leader's Comments

Lancashire Leaders Update

At the monthly Lancashire Leaders' meeting, the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) presented their response to the Government's Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships review. The key findings chime with the direction of the travel of the LEP. The review identified a number of new requirements. Many of the precise details are still in development, but LEPs are required to provide a short update on the key findings, which include:

- Introducing defined limits for Chairs and Deputy Chairs
- Establishing more representative boards of a maximum of 20 persons (with the option to co-opt up to five additional board members), aspiring to appoint two-thirds of board members from the private sector

- Improving the gender balance and representation of those with protected characteristics on boards, with an aim that women make up at least one-third of boards by 2020 and an expectation for equal representation by 2023
- All LEPs must fully operate as company entities; the Lancashire LEP was established as a company limited by guarantee and though fully compliant will need to produce audited accounts

Representatives of Lancashire Leaders met with Jake Berry MP on Tuesday 13 November. A devolution framework has not been finalised and Mr Berry MP offered to meet Leaders once further material is available. The framework would set out a road map for local authorities and explore different options, including a Mayor, a Combined Authority or other formats, as well as the potential benefits of each approach. Any devolution deal would require negotiation with government.

A further presentation on Health and Care was given by Dr Amanda Doyle, with mental health a current priority due to rising demand in this area. A long-term plan is to be agreed during 2019.

Work Programme updates were also presented and a Forward Plan.

WWI 100th Anniversary Remembrance

The Remembrance Service was very well attended despite heavy rain.

HS2

A discussion on HS2 was held for Group Leaders and Independent Members. We discussed background information and potential impacts for the district. Whilst the new HS2 lines would terminate at Crewe, HS2 trains would continue by joining the existing West Coast Main Line, thus potentially serving Lancaster.

No final decisions have been taken but Lancashire County Council has representation on a number of Transport for the North's technical working groups. They have confirmed that they are aware of the inclusion of Lancaster, as well as Preston, on the list of stations potentially requiring modification to accommodate HS2 services.

The County Council have provided assurance that they will continue to make the case for trains to stop at Lancaster and they will look to commission further economic evidence if necessary.

Eden North Project

The meeting on Friday 16 November included the City Council, County Council, LEP, Lancaster University and Eden representatives. Sir Tim Smit, Chair of Eden International, advised that he has been working on the health agenda and has had more offers of assistance with the project than he has ever seen.

The intention is to focus on Morecambe's strapline of "Beauty Surrounds, Health Abounds".

All partners are committed to a financially sustainable social enterprise that generates long-term benefits, supporting a seaside resort for the 21st century. Ambitions for the project are high, aiming to create a culturally significant attraction, treading sensitively and respecting the natural environment, changing perceptions and providing a focal point for cutting edge research to drive social and economic change. There is much work to be done on this project, but it has started positively.

A traffic study will be carried out in order to consider how best to accommodate the high numbers of visitors expected to the attraction, with particular consideration given to rail connections, parking and potential traffic bottlenecks.

A communication strategy was also discussed due to the high public profile of the project.

The next step for the project is to move through concept design to the outline planning stage. Practically, the partners will need to establish project controls as well as considering stakeholder engagement. There is a commitment to delivering a 'wow' factor and the presentation on Friday 16 November certainly provided this. It is fantastic to see the growing support, enthusiasm and hope amongst the community around this project.

4.0 Other Matters

Cabinet minutes for 6 November 2018 and 4 December 2018 are attached at the end of this agenda.

5.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 6 November 2018:

- (1) Progress with the Community Housing fund.

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 4 December 2018:

- (1) Housing Standards Enforcement Policy.
- (2) Budget and Policy Framework Update 2019/20 to 2023/24.
- (3) Funding the Future: Financial Sustainability Strategy.

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

- (1) Corporate Non-Housing Delivery Plan – Palatine Avenue Recreation Ground Improvement Works.
- (2) Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for Licensing of ICT Systems.
- (3) Lancaster Canal Quarter Regeneration – Appointment of Consultants.

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meetings held on 6 November 2018 and 4 December 2018.