

## **ITEMS DEFERRED FROM THE NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

### **1. Question from Councillor Jon Barry to Councillor Margaret Pattison**

*Do you agree with the officer decision to move Sanah's Indian food stall's daily pitch position to Church Street?*

#### **ANSWER**

The officer decision was actually to revoke street trading consents in Market St and Market Square.

The officer decision to grant a consent to trade in Church St was then done following agreement with the owners of the Indian food stall

The facts are as follows-

Lancaster City centre is an upcoming and thriving area and the council is committed to working with its partners to ensure sustainable growth. An important part of this is getting the right balance between shop and street-based businesses, as well as public events and entertainment.

Recently the museum has come back under the management control of the city council after 15 years. This has provided an opportunity to rethink the use of Market Square and nearby streets, to create exciting new shopper experiences that increase footfall to the city centre. This, in the long-term, will benefit all businesses and traders.

In order to achieve this objective, The officer undertook a review of the types and location of concessionary pitches in the city centre - starting with those located in Market Street and Market Square. He believes there are suitable alternative locations in the city centre that would greatly benefit from street trading and the type of shopping experiences we wish to create.

Therefore in accordance with the conditions of the street trading consent, which state clearly that consent is granted for a year but may be revoked by the Council ( delegated to the Chief Officer) at any time for any reason, the trading consents for two concessions on non-market days in Market St and Market Square were revoked.

The Council is under no obligation at all to provide a replacement but the officer made the offer of discussions with the concessionaires.

One concessionaire took up this offer.

Officers have met with the concessionaire on numerous occasions an amicable conclusion was reached with a location at the top of Church St being offered and accepted.

However, I understand the concessionaire then made alternative arrangements to trade from private land in the City Centre.

I agree with the principle of developing the city centre in a way that benefits all businesses and traders and that on occasion there will be a need for positive actions to be taken. In this case it provided a good result for all concerned.

## **2. Question from Councillor Hamilton-Cox to Councillor Nathan Burns**

*Has the expression of interest for grant-aiding a local full-fibre network been submitted by the city council to the Department for Culture Media and Sports?*

### **ANSWER**

In 2017 the Government launched the Local Full Fibre Network Programme (LFFN) – a competitive, exclusively capital, grant scheme to help local bodies deliver fast and reliable digital communications networks. The aim is to harness public sector connectivity and aggregate private sector demand to stimulate improvements in broadband connectivity. In August 2018 the Government issued revised LFFN guidance. There is now no fixed date for future submissions - an iterative approach to project selection has been initiated where:

- Local bodies with an interest in bidding to the LFFN are invited to submit an informal expression of interest (Eol) to the programme.
- A dialogue will take place to assess the project.
- A full proposal would be invited when the strategic approach is deemed satisfactory by Government.

While stated as being "informal", the Eol has a series of DCMS specific requirements to allow them to make an initial comparative analysis and initiate pre-dialogue. Bidders are expected to have a good idea of the coverage, project cost, funding required, delivery method and likely impact of the proposed investment.

Officers are working in partnership with the Lancaster Digital and other stakeholders on the development of proposal. There is a need for expert input to assist in bringing together key information which will allow the partnership to understand what can reasonably be achieved and to give an idea of the broad shape and costs of a proposal. The group is in the process of commissioning work which will: provide a sound basis on which to make a proposal under the Eol terms; gives stakeholders a clear understanding of the resources required to develop and agree a full proposal through the DCMS's full dialogue stage and Investment Panel requirements. The work should allow the Council to understand its own potential resource commitments required in engaging in a "full dialogue" with DCMS and the likely costs and benefits of developing and delivering any proposal. A report will be made to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

Officers have contacted DCMS noting that the local partnership does intend to make a formal Expression of Interest. We have noted that Lancaster is committed to a growing, prosperous and inclusive future building on the advantages of its world class University and growing knowledge economy.

## **3. Question from Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox to Councillor Darren Clifford**

*At full council in September 2017, Cllr Brookes asked you when the Middleton solar farm would be built out? You replied that it had been agreed to review the financial viability of this in March 2017.*

*In Appendix B of the budget framework documents presented to full council on 28th February 2018, there was reference to Middleton solar farm in 'Solar Farm Design & Business Case Development' in item 2.*

*In your annual report to full council in April you wrote that:*

*'Funds to continue feasibility into two potential sites for solar farms were secured at the most recent budget council.'*

*In Appendix B of the project monitoring report to cabinet on 6th November, the Middleton solar farm was notable by its absence.*

*What is the current status of the Middleton solar farm project?*

## **ANSWER**

Appendix B of the project monitoring report to Cabinet on 6th November does actually make reference to the proposed solar farm projects. Looking at the appendix there is reference to Solar Project Phase 1 (P65) and Solar Project Phase 2 (P66)

Solar Project Phase 1- is the project that has been developed for increasing the solar array on the roof of and within the grounds of Salt Ayre Leisure Centre. There is also a proposal to provide battery storage so that energy generated can be used when it is dark.

As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, we are updating our Capital Programme. All potential capital schemes are supported by an outline business case which, amongst other things, considers financial cost and return and fit with Council priorities. The Solar Farm business case is being assessed and scored alongside other bids for Capital funding as part of the budget setting process and will be presented as a proposal during this year's budget process

Solar Project Phase 2- is the project to assess the feasibility of using Council land to locate a Solar Farm. Land in Middleton has been considered for this and more recently the Salt Ayre former landfill site has become an option. Work is ongoing to assess feasibility.

Officers recently met with our expert advisor on renewable energy to progress. What was explored was how the development of Heysham Gateway could provide a strategic opportunity to drive economic growth and generate income through the provision of off-grid renewable energy, from a variety of sources- including a solar farm, to businesses in the area. Work is now progressing to develop this much more ambitious and bigger plan.

## **4. Question from Councillor Caroline Jackson to Councillor Andrew Warriner**

*During the years 2016/17 and 2017/18 how many stray dogs were collected by Lancaster City Council Dog Wardens? How many of these were restored to owners and how many passed on to a rescue centre?*

## **ANSWER**

During 2016/17 there were 197 stray dogs taken to the council's appointed kennels by dog wardens or the council's kennels contractor. Of these 128 were claimed by the owner and 69 were accepted by animal rescue organisations.

During 2017/18 there were 183 stray dogs taken to the council's appointed kennels by dog wardens or the council's kennels contractor. Of these 112 were claimed by the owner and 70 were accepted by animal rescue organisations.