

CABINET

6.00 P.M.

1ST OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Erica Lewis (Chair), Kevin Frea (Vice-Chair), Dave Brookes, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Janice Hanson, Caroline Jackson, Jean Parr, John Reynolds, Alistair Sinclair and Anne Whitehead

Officers in attendance:-

Kieran Keane	Chief Executive
Daniel Bates	Director of Corporate Services
Mark Davies	Director for Communities and the Environment
Jason Syers	Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration
Paul Thompson	Chief Financial Officer (Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer)
Debbie Chambers	Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Luke Gorst	Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer

22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3 September 2019 were approved as a correct record.

23 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

The Chairman advised the meeting that the proposed item of urgent business with regard to establishing a Local Plan Review Advisory Group had been withdrawn.

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point.

25 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members were advised that there had been no requests to speak at the meeting in accordance with Cabinet's agreed procedure.

At this point the Chair moved that standing order 17 (Cabinet Procedure Rule 17) be suspended to allow for questions to be taken from all members as the reports were introduced. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Whitehead and unanimously agreed.

Resolved unanimously:

(1) That standing order 17 (Cabinet Procedure Rule 17) be suspended.

26 RESERVES POLICY

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Whitehead)

Cabinet received a report from the Director of Corporate Services to consider and approve an updated Reserves Strategy and Action Plan.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

Option 1: Adopt the Strategy
Advantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved clarity with respect to the use of reserves. Greater assurance that reserves expenditure fits with corporate priorities and is appropriately authorised and monitored.
Disadvantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agreement of principles for the use of reserves reduces the risk that reserves expenditure is not adequately controlled which in turn might result in reduced financial resilience.
Option 2: Do not adopt the Strategy
Advantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Disadvantages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of clarity with respect to using reserves and processes for authorisation and monitoring of reserves will remain unclear.
Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of an updated Reserves Strategy increases the risks that reserves expenditure is not adequately controlled.

The officer preferred option is Option 1. This option is designed to clarify how reserves are managed and utilised in order to balance the delivery of council priorities with securing financial resilience. In accordance with Part 3 Section 5 Paragraph 2(d) of the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Budget and Performance Panel would have the opportunity to comment on the proposals prior to the revised Reserves Strategy being considered at full Council.

Councillor Whitehead proposed, seconded by Councillor Parr:-

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the revised Reserves Strategy and Action Plan set out in Appendices One and Two be approved.
- (2) That full Council amend the Budget & Policy Framework to incorporate the amendment to the Reserves Strategy.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Director of Corporate Services

Reasons for making the decision:

The report and appendices provide an update to the Council’s Reserves Strategy to clarify how reserves are managed and utilised in order to balance the delivery of council priorities with securing financial resilience. Any decision to amend the Budget Framework is a function of full Council. Overview and Scrutiny/Budget & Performance will be consulted on the proposals in accordance with the Constitution prior to their submission to full Council.

27 DIGITAL STRATEGY (Pages 9 - 15)

(Cabinet Members with Special Responsibility Councillors Hanson & Hamilton Cox)

Cabinet received a report from the Director of Corporate Services to consider and approve the Council’s Digital Strategy.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the report as follows:

Option 1: Adopt Digital Strategy
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant support to the Council’s economic prosperity plan by providing first class digital infrastructure such as full fibre and 5G to support a growing tech sector in the district which promotes high value and green jobs. • Focus on partnerships which will enable stakeholders to come together to deliver enhancements in health, innovation, nature and knowledge and tackle issues of social exclusion. • The use of digital methodologies at the Council will make it easier for residents to access services whilst making the Council more efficient and agile in order to better utilise its properties and reduce carbon emissions through route optimisation, reduced travel and paperless.
<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are risks associated with delivering complex technology projects in order to meet digital ambitions. These risks will be managed as part of the programme and project management processes.
Option 2: Do not adopt the Digital Strategy
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resource available for other areas of ambition.
<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lancaster district, which has a significant reliance of the technology sector, might fall behind other areas without a current strategy covering digital infrastructures and partnerships. • Council services might remain relatively less accessible and the Council would find it more difficult to drive efficiencies without coherent and integrated digital plans.
<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are risks that the Lancaster economy and the Council itself will ‘fall

behind' if it is not able to adequately respond to the opportunities provided via digital technology in an organised manner.

The officer preferred option is Option 1.

Councillor Hanson proposed, seconded by Councillor Hamilton-Cox:-

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the Digital Strategy as set out in the report and Appendix 1, appended to the minutes, be approved.
- (2) That Cabinet pre-approve the principle of funding for infrastructure works in Dalton Square, the establishment of a mechanism for delivering a full fibre network to the Lancaster district and the establishment of a collaborative workspace in Lancaster subject to reserves and capital funding bids being made in accordance with the budget framework.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for making the decision:

The Digital Strategy underpins all of the Council’s Ambitions via the delivery of excellent digital infrastructure, partnership and change plans. The strategy sets out an ambition to work towards a smart district utilising technology to become a clean, green and healthy district that benefits all residents and businesses.

28 HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE REVIEW 2019

(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Brookes)

Cabinet received a report from the Director for Communities and the Environment to consider introducing a new fare tariff in relation to licensed hackney carriages operating in the Lancaster district. At a meeting on 29 August 2019 the Licensing Committee had, in its capacity as an advisory committee recommended Cabinet’s approval of the new tariffs.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in a report to the Licensing Committee, appended to the agenda, as follows:

	Option 1: Maintain current table of fares approved in 2017.	Option 2: Apply retail price index (RPI) to current flag fall.	Option 3: Apply 20p increase to flag fall
--	--	---	--

Advantages	Public are aware of expected fares when hiring a hackney carriage.	This seems to be a general approach across County and Country, although not a common approach to all.	Representatives of the trade supported this approach when discussed at the Taxi Working Group
Disadvantages	The current table of fares has not been reviewed since 2017.	Allows for a minimal increase only (2.1%).	The increase is not supported by an agreed or common methodology that reflects the cost of owning and operating a hackney carriage in the District.
Risks	Drivers may decide to leave the trade, if they decide that the profit is marginal.	Drivers may decide to leave the trade, if they decide that the profit is marginal.	Decrease in business for hackney carriages due to fare adjustments.

The Officer preferred option is Option 3 to apply an increase of 20p to the initial flag fall. Applying the tariff increase would seem appropriate so as to help ensure that hackney carriage proprietors receive a reasonable increase in fare income. The increase reflects necessary and proportionate adjustments, given that there were no increases in fares last year (2018) and the increase in the previous year was marginal, based on the annual RPI. Any concerns from members of the public will be addressed through the consultation process by placing a notice in the local press proposing the revised tariff. An amended table of fares, that reflected option 3, was appended to the agenda as Appendix 3.

It was reported that there was an error in Appendix 3 and that the tariff 3 should read £5.20 and not £5.00 and this would be amended prior to going out to consultation.

Councillor Brookes proposed, seconded by Councillor Parr:-

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report subject to the amendment to tariff 3 in Appendix 3, as set out above, be approved.”

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That the new table of fares as recommended by Licensing Committee on 29 August 2019 be approved subject to a revision to Tariff 3, Appendix 3 to read £5.20 and not £5.00.
- (2) That the Licensing Manager be authorised to advertise the new table of fares as required by legislation.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Corporate Director for Communities and the Environment

Reasons for making the decision:

The setting of fares is an Executive function as it is not one that is listed in the Local Authorities (Function and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and therefore falls to the Cabinet to make the final decision whether to approve the increase in charges recommended by Licensing Committee on 29 August 2019. The decision enables the proposed fares to be published in the local paper and allow for any objections to be considered prior to coming into effect.

29 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Lewis and seconded by Councillor Reynolds:-

“That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.”

Members then voted as follows:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

30 EDEN PROJECT NORTH (Pages 16 - 17)**(Cabinet Members with Special Responsibility Councillors Lewis and Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to progress arrangements with Eden Projects International Ltd. The report was exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option, were set out in the exempt report.

It was proposed by Councillor Hamilton-Cox, seconded by Councillor Lewis and resolved unanimously:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) The resolution is set out in a minute exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Chief Executive

Reasons for making the decision:

Eden Project North provides an opportunity to deliver considerable social and economic benefits for Morecambe and the wider area and the decision is consistent with the Council's Economic development intentions. Advice will be taken from the Council's specialist legal advisors to ensure state aid and procurement rules are adhered to as well as seeking assistance in the negotiation and drafting of key legal documents that will comply with the law and fully protect the Council's position.

31 SALE OF WOOD STREET CAR PARK (Pages 18 - 20)**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hamilton-Cox)**

Cabinet received a report from the Interim Regeneration Manager to consider the disposal of a short-term stay surface car park for redevelopment.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred option were set out in a report exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Councillor Hamilton-Cox proposed, seconded by Councillor Parr:-

"That the recommendations, as set out in the exempt report, be approved."

Councillors then voted:-

Resolved unanimously:

- (1) The resolution is set out in a minute exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Officer responsible for effecting the decision:

Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration

Reasons for making the decision:

The decision is consistent with all of the Council's four priorities in the Council Plan. Exactly how the decision fitted with those priorities was set out in the exempt report.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 6.43 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Liz Bateson, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582047 or email
ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk**

MINUTES PUBLISHED ON MONDAY 7 OCTOBER 2019

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE DECISIONS CONTAINED IN THESE MINUTES:
TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2019.**