



Leader's Report 29 January 2020

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATION

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Cabinet

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2019. The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 January 2020 were not available at the time of publication of the agenda and will be tabled at the February Council meeting.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There are no decisions to report since the last Leader's Report on 18 December 2019.

3.0 Leader's Comments

Happy New Year! I hope everyone managed something of a break over Christmas and is ready for what is shaping up to be an exciting year for our district & the council.

Budget

Thanks to all the officers & councillors across parties who are contributing to the budget process. I'm aware this cross-party engagement through the budget process is new but I do hope it provides the opportunity for all councillors who want to contribute to do so, and maybe even lead to a shorter council budget meeting. On that note, if anyone is still secretly nursing a budget proposal, please do ask the appropriate officers for help in costing it and ensure Cllr Whitehead is aware of

it as soon as possible. The later in the budget process we get, the harder it is to include new things.

Capital strategy & borrowing

Thanks also to everyone involved in the capital strategy briefings in recent weeks as both presenters and attendees and the work of the cross-party capital strategy group. As government funding for councils continues to reduce and be uncertain, the need to generate new revenue streams continues to increase in importance. Further, whether we want to build a solar farm or grow our council housing stock, it most likely involves borrowing and therefore it is important that every councillor understands the decisions we are taking, and that as a council we are clear when we are investing to generate an income, and when we are making a decision to subsidise a project important to the district.

Community engagement

Four thousand (4000) letters have gone out to households inviting them to express interest in being part of the climate emergency people's jury, and so far we have had a very good response rate.

After a hiatus for the pre-election period, the advisory groups are meeting again. Since council last met there have been meetings of the community wealth building partnership, and the culture, heritage, arts & leisure advisory group, with meetings of the climate emergency advisory, well-being advisory group happening this week. I would encourage all councillors to be part of these conversations. They are important ways to shape the council's work in these areas and to hear from residents and organisations who have relevant expertise. It would also be very useful if all councillors could help to connect residents and organisations to the conversations that most interest them.

4.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decision was taken by Cabinet on 3 December 2019:

- (1) Sale of Cable/Wood Street Car Park, Lancaster

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 14 January 2020:

- (1) Priorities Update
- (2) Morecambe Winter Gardens
- (3) Investment Proposals

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2019.