

## CABINET

11.00 A.M.

8TH DECEMBER 2020

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Erica Lewis (Chair), Dave Brookes, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Caroline Jackson, Jean Parr and Anne Whitehead

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Janice Hanson

Officers in attendance:

Kieran Keane	Chief Executive
Mark Davies	Director for Communities and the Environment
Sarah Davies	Director of Corporate Services
Jason Syers	Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration
Paul Thompson	Chief Financial Officer (Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer)
Luke Gorst	Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Debbie Chambers	Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Fiona Clark	Planning Officer (Policy)
Liz Bateson	Principal Democratic Support Officer, Democratic Services

### 88 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 November 2020 were approved as a correct record.

### 89 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE LEADER

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

### 90 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared an 'other' interest in the report on Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation: It was noted they had declared an 'other' interest when a previous report concerning Houses of Multiple Occupation was tabled at October's Cabinet meeting (Minute 63 refers) and it was confirmed that their 'other' interest did not preclude them from voting on the item.

- Councillors Brookes, Jackson, Parr & Whitehead lived in one of the areas affected.
- Councillor Hamilton-Cox owned a property within the area affected.

### 91 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 requested 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 moved by Councillor Brookes, seconded by Councillor Hamilton-Cox and there was no dissent to the proposal.

**Resolved unanimously:**

(1) That Standing Order 17 (Cabinet Procedure Rule 17) be suspended.

**92 RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS AND HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Hanson)**

Cabinet received a report from the Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration which sought a resolution from Cabinet to formally adopt the Residential Conversion and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document. The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) had been through two stages of consultation and the views raised had been considered in the drafting of the final version. The report outlined the content of the SPD, and the Consultation Statement attached to the report outlined the stages of consultation and how the responses were taken into account and sought a resolution to adopt the SPD as a material consideration for the determination of planning applications.

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

<b>Option 1 - Adoption of the Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document</b>
<b>Advantages:</b> The SPD will provide guidance for determining planning applications for HMOs, particularly in respect of the way in which the percentage of HMOs in an area will be calculated and the standards expected for HMOs. The SPD will be afforded weight in decision making.
<b>Disadvantages:</b> No disadvantages.
<b>Risks:</b> No risks.
<b>Option 2: Do not adopt the Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document</b>
<b>Advantages:</b> No advantages.
<b>Disadvantages:</b> There will be a lack of clarity with regard to the calculation of the percentage of HMOs in an area and the standards required. The SPD will not be afforded weight in decision making.
<b>Risks:</b> No risks.

The officer preferred option is Option 1 – Adoption of the Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document. Adoption of the SPD will ensure the contents can be given weight in decision making.

Councillor Lewis proposed, seconded by Councillor Jackson:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That the Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.
- (2) That the necessary measures be undertaken to publicise the adoption of the Residential Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document in accordance with national legislation.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration

**Reasons for making the decision:**

The decision is consistent with the ambition within the Corporate Plan to enhance community cohesion. The SPD builds upon policies in the Local Plan, particularly policy DM13, which aims to ensure a balanced community. The SPD will support the implementation of this policy. The SPD, in conjunction with policy DM13 and proposals to designate an Article 4 Direction seek to address the detrimental impacts of concentration of HMOs in accordance with the ambitions of the Corporate Plan and the Local Plan.

**93 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM PROPOSAL FOR THE BAY AREA**

**(Cabinet Member with Special Responsibility Councillor Lewis)**

Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive to request Cabinet's endorsement of the full proposal for a unitary council for the Bay area. At meetings on 5 November 2020, Cabinet endorsed, and full Council authorised the submission of an outline proposal for a unitary authority for the Bay to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the subsequent preparation of a full proposal. The report presented that full proposal for approval. If approved, the Barrow, South Lakeland and Lancaster councils would present the full proposal to Government, demonstrating how a unitary council would be an effective driver and enabler of economic, social and environmental benefits for the area's residents, businesses and visitors, realise the strategic potential of the area and enable transformation of public services.

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

<b>Option 1: Submit the proposal to government by 9 December 2020</b>
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<p><b>Advantages:</b> The Bay unitary option remains on the table to be considered by government. The preferences of our residents and stakeholders are supported. Builds on the strong relationship with the Bay authorities and partners. Potential for benefits and opportunities for our residents and businesses, opportunities for shared priorities and outcomes across the Bay area, more sustainable services working with connected communities, integrated health and social care reform. Provides a greater opportunity to deliver the economic prosperity and growth identified in The Bay Prosperity and Resilience Strategy, sooner and at scale Potential for a louder voice with government</p>
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with opportunities to influence policy developments, funding priorities and investment. Potential for a coordinated Bay wide approach to climate change action. Potential for more devolved funding and responsibilities as a unitary council within a Combined Authority area.

**Disadvantages:** Moving forwards, a great deal of work will be required but there will be the opportunity to plan and resource this well.

**Risks:** There is a risk that the Bay proposal is not supported by government. All possible steps have been taken to ensure a strong proposal is made.

#### **Option 2: Do not submit the proposal to government**

**Advantages:** None. No obvious advantages, particularly as the option to remain as a single district is unlikely to continue as local government reorganisation and devolution plans develop at the national government level.

**Disadvantages:** The Bay unitary proposal will not be considered by government and the district will have significantly less influence on any future unitary developments. Lost opportunity to deliver benefits and outcomes for our residents and businesses, develop for shared priorities and outcomes across the Bay area, more sustainable services working with connected communities, integrated health and social care reform. The unitary proposal preferred by most residents cannot be progressed. Reduced opportunity to achieve a louder voice with government to influence policy developments, funding priorities and investment. The Council's influence on local government reorganisation would be significantly reduced. Lost opportunity to bring additional devolved funds and responsibilities into the district and the wider Bay area sooner than would otherwise be possible. Lost opportunity for a coordinated Bay wide approach to climate change action.

**Risks:** If the Bay proposal is not submitted, early discussions for reorganisation in Lancashire suggest the district could become part of a NW Lancashire potential unitary. Although not fully assessed this model does not present opportunities to build on shared economic functioning areas, Travel to Work/ Learn areas or a shared health footprint. The case therefore carries uncertainty and risk.

Councillor Lewis proposed, seconded by Councillor Parr:-

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

Councillors then voted:-

#### ***Resolved unanimously:***

- (1) That Cabinet approves the full proposal for a unitary council for the Bay area, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and recommends it to Council for their consideration and approval before submission by the Leader and Chief Executive to the Government by 9 December 2020.
- (2) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to approve any minor amendments that may arise following consideration of the proposal by Barrow Borough and South Lakeland District Councils, prior to submission.

**Officer responsible for effecting the decision:**

Chief Executive

**Reasons for making the decision:**

Exploring the case for reform has taken account of the benefits a change to local government could deliver and relates to all services delivered by the council as well as the outcomes for our communities. In addition, a new unitary council would have access to additional resources and a greater degree of influence over sub regional and national policy. Developing the case for reorganisation and reform has required consideration of the benefits a change to local government could deliver for economic prosperity and resilience within Morecambe Bay and the opportunities to improve and maximise the wellbeing of residents and positively reduce inequalities. This accords with the Council's priorities of working across boundaries to deliver economic prosperity, strong and involved communities, community wealth, health and well-being, social value and tackling the climate emergency.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 12.00 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Liz Bateson, Democratic Services - email [ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk)**

**MINUTES PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2020**

**EFFECTIVE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTING MINUTE 92 THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2020**

**MINUTE 93 WAS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN AS IT WAS REFERRED TO THE EXTRA  
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD LATER THE SAME DAY.**